Women with young children are a growing population experiencing homelessness. Transitional housing services provide shelter and educational programming aimed at fostering the development of skills necessary to attain and maintain basic needs.

Adagio Health’s transitional home, Healthy Start House (hsh) served as a case study in which to explore the intersection of design, service and social innovation. The metrics of success outlined by the county for hsh include attaining permanent housing and employment or education. Using a co-creative process, exploratory and generative research uncovered that the service had no clear route to assist the women to develop core competencies to meet the county’s metrics of success.

Rather than create a new extension of the current service, this design solution focuses on amplifying the resources and infrastructure already in place to improve the current service delivery. The solution includes an ideal plan for the hsh staff to work with the clients to comprehensively develop their core competencies, and an expanded view of how a money management system helps the clients meet the county’s metrics. We hypothesize, through this system, clients will re-enter society smoothly, armed with the skills and knowledge needed to provide for themselves and their children. While the design generated much enthusiasm from all stakeholders, the concept would benefit from further testing and iterations over a longer length of time to understand if it can, indeed, improve learning and performance outcomes and create sustained behavior change.

Keywords: service design, social innovation, homelessness, service, participatory design, co-design, non-profit, women
The dedicated involvement of many individuals made this project a success. Collaborating with such warm and dedicated people made this experience truly eye opening and at times humbling. The administration, staff and clients welcomed us into their world and allowed us to work throughout the year, sometimes without knowing what we were doing or where we would finish, and for this, we are incredibly grateful. We hope, even if in just a small part, we made a contribution to an idea that will contribute to the vision and success of the organization. This organization works hard to change the lives of many women and we know a bright future awaits them.

We owe a tremendous thank you to the mentorship and guidance of Kristin Hughes. Her sensitivity, positivity, insight and work ethic helped us significantly grow over the year. She leads by example and we hope that she sees her influence in our lives by the kind of designers we will be as we enter the workforce and into the future.

Stephanie would like to thank:
Mom and Dad, for their confidence and encouragement, and willingness to help in any way possible if it means I can get more sleep. And to Jonathan, for his patience, optimism, and being the brightest part of every day.

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Mom and Dad, for their endless cheering, Jamie, for knowing that I am almost always hungry and thus keeping my soul nourished, my belly fed and my heart full. And to James, my most unexpected design discovery.

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UNDERSTANDING THE LANDSCAPE
In considering this yearlong project, we started by choosing to work as a pair, each agreeing that professionally we would rarely find ourselves as sole practitioners. Additionally, because we believe strongly that one of the primary ways design is most effective is through the work achieved with other disciplines, we sought an organization with which to partner. We were personally interested in applying our design knowledge in an area where design is traditionally not present or to an underrepresented demographic. We are both passionate about supporting women and women’s issues around independence and equality, and we wanted to exercise our skills in an area not heavily reliant on technology. We also hoped to work with a group of people with the intent to investigate how design could help them self-organize and create change. With all of this criteria in place, our adviser discovered Adagio Health via a proposal for another project, and thought they may be a strong candidate for a partnership. After an initial meeting with them, we agreed that they could be a great fit, and proceeded to move forward to negotiate how our partnership would develop.

Initially, Adagio Health asked for a mentorship program for their transitional home, Healthy Start House (hsh). This home is a long-term homeless shelter where women and their children can live for up to two years. Adagio Health wanted to figure out how the success rate in reintegrating women back into their communities and where the women transitioning out might need additional support. Given this framing, the intent of this project seemed to point to developing a new arm to complement their existing service. As the project unfolded it became evident that it would provide a rich learning space, threading together concepts of co-creation, evidence and environments, which appear in services, design and social innovation. Much of the work dealt with understanding the relationship and interdependence of these three different content areas and how designers could successfully work in their intersection.

In the genetic code of design, or at least of its more thoughtful part, there has also been a strong idea [design’s] role should be one of improving the quality of life; to act as a bridge between technical and social innovation to the point of proposing artefacts able to help people to live better. Ezio Manzini

Introduction

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Introduction
Co-Creation
Inherent in the intersection of services, human-centered design and social innovation is the co-creative development process. In all of these spaces, designers increasingly consider how to create with, not for, although the process of engagement identified as co-creation differs for these three spaces.

Co-creation in services refers to the moment of production between the service or service provider and the user. The question is how to support the user via the service provider. As the user undergoes a set activities and processes involved in the production of the service, the customer and provider co-create unique experiences (Gupta and Vajic 2010, 55). When each user is their own unique being, it can be difficult to choreograph just the right sequence, and in providers need the appropriate supports to dynamically field changing users’ needs. Parker saw in the shift in the way services are now developed as opposed to the past, placeholders’ needs and experiences and designed the support systems. Indeed, the new service model places support as the service most valued by a consumer (Parker 2010, 10), the result of acknowledging a users individuality. Users want the freedom to be able to shape a service according to their own desires, or at least perceive this to be the case, thus service providers are transitioning from provider to facilitator. “The main role of the facilitators is to enable customers to learn by doing and to help them acquire the appropriate norms and procedures by participating in activities” (Gupta and Vajic 2010, 45). While still using co-creation, the co-creation discussion in services is focused on the production of the service itself, between the service provider and the user, not necessarily the designer of the service and the user.

However, if we move to human-centered design, co-creation distinctly refers to the role of the designer in contest with his or her user; i.e. Sanders believes that design’s role is shifting. Not only are “everyday people” becoming designers in their own context, but people desire creativity, many only needing simple tools to help them create. Through engaging these everyday people in a creative capacity we can design, not for materialism and commodity, but to support everyone’s capability (Sanders 2006, 19–33). This respect, designers create, not fully fleshed out, prescribed processes and environments for a service, but scaffolds for the service providers to support them in their roles as service facilitators. Sanders explains scaffolds as “communicational spaces that support and sustain a user’s creativity, enhancing the conveyability of their ideas. Designers will increasingly become the creators of scaffolds upon which everyday people can express their creativity” (Sanders 2006, 54).

Ezio Manzini, creator of the colex network, sees designers’ roles as leveraging their skills to strengthen what has already been developed by others. Designers can facilitate a central core of services that help people create, to make tools available and intangible. Designers of “support social innovation using design skills to guide promising cases more visibility to make them more effective, or to facilitate their replicability” (Iwasiw 2000). Manzini says that designers can amplify the efforts of non-designers working within their communities by empowering co-design processes, thus helping to make tools visible and “inviting the resulting intricate and to concoct a new generation of enabling solutions, i.e. services, products and communication specifically conceived to support them” (Iwasiw 2000).

Within the realm of social innovation, some consultancies are testing the grounds for co-creation of products and services for social innovation, inviting the public and businesses to participate, and in some cases, directly creating the process. One example created by realspace and launched in 2010 is Openideo.com, an online platform for people to collaboratively design for social good. Users are encouraged to be inclusive, community-centered, collaborative, optimistic and always in beta (Openideo 2010). Through Openideo, users can co-innovation using design scaffolds for the structure which allows the community to crowdsource solutions to global issues by utilizing the three phases of the design process: inspiration, conception, evaluation. Through user-developed services, question is how to support the necessary scaffolds that are designed to address a concern that may span globally, and everyday people have a platform to share ideas that could impact the world.

Evidence
Within services, design and social innovation, evidence takes on varying forms and is referenced differently, but serves a similar purpose throughout.

In the context of design, evidence appears in many forms across what Richard Buchanan calls “the four foci.” The manifestation can take shape in first order design as signs, symbols and images, in second order, as physical objects. Third order design includes activities, services and processes and so evidence may take the form of an interaction, a conversation, and as fourth order design creates systems, environments, ideas and values, evidence would include attitudes and practices (Buchanan 1996, 31). Part of a designer’s responsibility is to determine and design the appropriate artifacts to support the intended solution. Looking at some of the work done within and beyond the realm of social innovation provides context for how designers utilize evidence across the orders.

Designers plan an increasingly important role in the development of services. Services utilize evidence to help monitor a users’ progress, positive emotion, and support or communicate the brand or service concept to the user. Because services are intangible, it is important to consider the visual clues provided by people or things, to ensure that a consistent and coherent picture of the intended service offering is conveyed (Bendapudi and Berntsen 2013, 2). Evidence management is a lot like advertising, except that it turns a company into a living, breathing, advertisement for itself (Bendapudi and Berntsen 2013, 2). If appropriate evidence is designed and provided throughout the service experience, and the proper supports are in place, service provider can have more freedom to facilitate and “co-create” the service of the service reference above. This is shown at the Mayn Clinic from the cleanliness of their employees’ uniforms, which display the care they take to present themselves to their patients, to service provider’s ability to convey the medical and emotional care of their patients (Bendapudi and Berntsen 2013). Businesses and organizations increasingly understand the value of cohesive and well-crafted evidence experiences throughout a customer journey. Designers’ skills—such as guiding research with users, making processes and thinking visible through maps and diagrams, among others—allow the creators to help users and that help ensure a successful service experience.

Within the context of social innovation Project H, lead by Emily Pilloton and Matthew Miller, partnered with the Bertie County School District in North Carolina “to help improve their schools’ environments, materials, and...
systems through design” (Project H Design 2010). Project H is working with the county to integrate critical creative design thinking into the high school curriculum. The root of the curriculum is to provide transferable skills and citizenship through improving community infrastructures (Project H Design 2010). Aside from delivering a new approach to education, “they hope to instill design thinking in the minds of young citizens, so that they may be better equipped to take on the next generation of global issues” (Project H Design 2010).

One of Project H’s biggest achievements is “Studio H, a public high school course with a ‘design/build’ curriculum that sparks rural community development through real world, built projects” (Studio H 2011). Evidence in this case includes the curriculum for the class, the class space, the finished projects within the Bertie community, as well as the outcomes of each student. All these are tangible outcomes that give Studio H presence within the community. Additional evidence extends to the Studio H website, providing a place to communicate and document class progress and the evolving curriculum available to anyone interested in replicating the program. Evidence in this case includes the curriculum for the class, the class space, the finished projects within the Bertie community, as well as the outcomes of each student. All these are tangible outcomes that give Studio H presence within the community. Additional evidence extends to the Studio H website, providing a place to communicate and document class progress and the evolving curriculum available to anyone interested in replicating the program.

It is imperative that designers spend this time to both identify and understand the perspectives and values of the stakeholders involved in each project. By working to empathize with the various stakeholders, designers can connect with users who feel listened to and understood. Through this relationship designers can identify patterns, structures, and relationships to provide meaning and value to the stakeholder, considering the actions manifested by a user and the actions of external forces experienced by a user in a perceived relationship, creating an experience (Dewey 1934, 44). Relationships will define the nature of environment and the attitude of the users within.

Within the realm of social innovation, organizations explore how design can create a climate for change. “Social innovation mobilizes diffuse social resources (in terms of creativity, skills, knowledge and entrepreneurship). For this reason, it is a vector of change” (Jones 2010). While Connect Bertie is explicitly a visible campaign to generate funding and excitement to install a broadband connection to every household within the school district, it is actually about rebuilding the community. Project H understands that both the community and the community members need support to make a cultural shift in the way they see themselves and behave as change agents. The blue dot design which reads “Connect Bertie” was produced as stickers, T-shirts, posters, and postcards. “This winter and in the spring of 2010, we will paint the sides of about ten barns around the county with two-foot diameter Connect Bertie dots” (Project H Design 2010). Explicitly, the Connect Bertie dots aim to foster an environment in which the community members are both the rendezvous for the community through educating and engaging their youth. By asking the younger generations to connect within Bertie County to contribute to the growth and rebuilding of the community, they are encouraging a new, energetic emotional and personal investments upon the part of the younger generations. It is through these varying design initiatives that Bertie County will reinvent and thrive.

Approach

Many opportunities lie within the intersection of design, services and social innovation and there are several examples of the increasing activity within this space. There is a larger community seeking to use design as a change agent, but no literature on these approaches to integrating design fit within services for those experiencing homelessness or non-profit public services. Moving forward we will use frameworks and principles of co-design in our research and throughout our design process. Like Jones and Project H, we will attempt to strengthen the core knowledge base already in place and amplify the resources and systems to create a lasting and sustainable service. Because of the continually changing climate within these as the client population shifts, we will consider how evidence can enrich the service and enable the staff to become facilitators throughout each client’s journey.

Emotion

An environment can take many forms yet always has an emotional or attitudinal affect on its users. It could be a physical space that a user exists in, a set of relationships or the feeling/experience that unfolds over time. Through the lens of service design, an experience, at its base, can be defined as one’s journey through a series of touchpoints. The process of moving through these touchpoints alone does not create the experience as a whole. Experience also relies upon a user’s past and present state of mind. Parker argues “services need to be understood as a journey or a cycle—a series of critical encounters that take place over time and across channels” (Parker 2006, 19). In order to conceive of this journey, designers strive to understand the scope of the area within which they are working, and to learn about all the stakeholders involved. Tools such as blueprinting, journey maps and stakeholder mapping provide a holistic view and also a way to engage with the details of the service, understanding how each part effects the whole and unfolding over time, essentially creating an environment. Those parts might include processes, protocols or artifacts meant to contribute to a seamless service experience. This approach can shape the service organization around the experiences and the engagement of the users conforming to the service organization (Parker 2006, 8-9).

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Families are a growing population experiencing homelessness. The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) defines a family as typically “headed by a single woman who on average is in her late 20s, with approximately two children, one or both under six years of age.” In 2009, “as many as 535,447 people in families were sheltered a 13 percent increase since 2007.” Additionally, public school systems reported that “over 956,000 homeless students were enrolled in the 2008-09 school year,” a 20% rise from the previous year (Opening Doors 2010, 12-13).

The reason for increased homelessness varies. Government agencies suggest factors including loss of affordable housing, wages and public assistance that have not kept up with the cost of living, job loss and rising debt. Other research has also shown that domestic or sexual violence was the immediate cause of their homelessness (Opening Doors 2010, 13). Also, through interviews with the staff of HSH, we learned that other factors include substance abuse or intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (IDD) which contribute to women falling into debt. Another scenario includes women aging out of foster care, those individuals spend most of their lives in the system and never develop the supports to help them maintain financial independence. Homelessness is more often an outcome of other issues women are trying to manage.

In 2010, the USICH, for the first time, developed a comprehensive program documenting data trends and developed a plan to end homelessness. Families experiencing homelessness often face additional barriers in maintaining basic needs which homelessness exacerbates. Unlike short-term shelters, transitional housing aims to fulfill four main goals:

• To provide a safe and secure shelter for families and individuals.
• To connect families and individuals to other public & health services.
• It allows time for an individual to gain life skills and/or a job in order to provide for him or herself and family.
• Creates a community of support from other clients and case managers throughout his or her journey to become self-sufficient.

The crux of the plan is to provide stable and permanent housing so people can then seek “good health, positive educational outcomes, or reach one’s economic potential” (Opening Doors 2010, 4-5). While policy makers are working to make housing more affordable, transitional housing programs currently provide an option for those who need long term housing packaged with additional social and financial services.
Healthy Start House (hsh) is a transitional housing nonprofit in Pittsburgh and the focus of our research. Operated by Adagio Health, which provides women’s health and parenting education services, hsh began as an extension of Healthy Start with the purpose being to provide a safe place for new mothers to recover from giving birth and learn basic parenting skills over the course of a few days. With their first client, hsh realized it would be something other than its original vision. They began providing shelter to women experiencing homelessness for longer durations, up to two years. hsh’s primary mission is to assist women find appropriate permanent housing. The home can accommodate up to 6 women and their children at one time, relying on 8 staff members and two management positions.

Women experiencing homelessness that are pregnant, immediately postpar-tum or have children under the age of 10 are allowed to apply for residence. Women apply to live at hsh and undergo an interview process in which they are screened for substances and asked some questions. Clients are expected to cook dinner one night a week for the house and attend programming for four hours a day during the week, as well as work toward and maintain other goals, as established by the case manager. There is an established curfew, along with other rules, and clients are expected to complete a daily chore. Since the start of the research, the client handbook has undergone revision and management implemented several new systems and processes.

The Need
Adagio Health approached us to develop a mentorship program for the women as they transitioned out of care, and to help them establish metrics which they could use to measure their progress and successes to maintain and garner new funding. When beginning this process we recognized that we would work with a demographic, both in the staff and the clients, that possessed life experiences dissimilar to much of our own. It would be important to collaborate closely with each group and attempt to immerse ourselves as part of the ecosystem which is hsh to become peers, as opposed to external evaluators (Manzini 2005, 8).

Upon entering this partnership with hsh, primary drivers included understanding how design could work with an organization that may not otherwise have exposure to design resources; experiencing a co-creative process to learn how to immerse ourselves in an environment and take on the roles of facilitators as opposed to sole creators; and to assist an organization to find its strengths in order to create a sustainable and successful future.

Healthy Start House
EXPLORATORY RESEARCH
To understand the landscape of transitional housing programs, we sought out other programs in Pittsburgh and in the mid-western region. While non-profits position themselves in a variety of ways, emphasizing areas such as faith, literary, or community, several consistent patterns arose. Most transitional housing programs own a building of apartments or own series of apartments and families live on their own. This means that the families do not have shared living spaces to foster community or peer support, however being co-located in the building is enough to encourage a little or a lot of interaction depending on the person. Every program has at least one caseworker acting as a liaison between other service providers and the family. Last, all homes offer, if not require, programming to build and strengthen life skills. 

**To understand the landscape of transitional housing programs, we sought out other programs in Pittsburgh and in the mid-western region.**

**Healthy Start House**

Healthy Start House is a unique organization comprised of, unlike other transitional homes, a shared living space with staff monitoring the house around the clock. Additionally, the house provides more structure and rules to live in the home. However, even though men’s operations and structure differ from other transitional homes, all are beholden to country requirements.

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**Healthy Start House Staff**

Healthy Start House Staff sees a small staff of 10 women including the manager and case worker, ranging in age from mid-thirties to mid-fifties. Like any group they have diverse personalities, but overall they love to laugh and swap stories. All are mothers and some are grandmothers. Because our intention was that the staff use and execute our design recommendations, it was important that we get to know them and their roles within the organization.

**Healthy Start House Clients**

Healthy Start House Clients The residents of Healthy Start House, referred to as clients, come from diverse educational and ethnic backgrounds and come from a variety of circumstances including fleeing domestic violence, prior substance abuse issues, aging out of foster care or debt accumulation. Most are not working. While Healthy Start House has previously accepted clients with IDD, they are attempting to select their clients based on the services they can provide on site to ensure that clients have the best opportunity to be successful. Common issues that both the staff and clients identify in the clients include difficulty managing money and debt, and developing appropriate boundaries for their relationships. When discussing their support networks, they frequently included other female figures: mothers, grandmothers, sisters, girl friends.

**The following section details the exploratory research activities conducted with the staff to meet the goals of understanding who they are as well as uncovering opportunities to improve the service based on Adagio’s main goals which include increasing staff and client engagement, implement measurable goals, and develop metrics for success.**
Healthy Start House Residence

Inside HSH Photos

First floor: foyer, kitchen, multi-purpose room, staff office, message and information boards in the hallway.
Second and third floor: client’s room.
Basement: children’s playroom.
Exploratory Research  |  48

Healthy Start House Staff
Activities & Methods

Introduction to the Service and Service Delivery

Goal
• Get to know the staff more personally
• Understand what staff perceived their job to be and how they did it
• Understand if there were discrepancies between what staff described their job to be and what they did day to day

Methods
5 participants
Activity Format
Staff described tasks, responsibilities, feelings, challenges and rewards of their jobs.

Insights
Most staff members work a second job and staff seem generally happy at the house. In their five-day journals, the majority reported that they spent most of the day doing housework, making dinner or baby sitting. They talk to clients often but it was unclear from their comments if those casual conversations might be considered teachable moments or day to day small talk. However, when asked, they had a difficult time articulating what their actual roles were other than to make sure the clients were safe.

What a Woman Needs to be Self-Sufficient

Goal
• Have the staff identify skills and needs required to be self-sufficient
• Understand the staff’s perspective on their roles and responsibilities as service providers of the house

Small group workshop 1: 3 participants
Three scaffolded activities: Maslow’s hierarchy of needs

Activity Format
With the prompt "What are a person’s basic needs?" the staff rearranged Maslow’s needs, which we’d written on post-it notes, based on their opinions and personal experiences.

Insights
Staff often referenced women and supported decisions with anecdotes from their interactions with clients and their own family. Motivation, self-esteem and family (support from relatives or community) were deemed the most important, and staff believed women must have these needs to successfully obtain jobs, shelter or food.
EXPLORATORY RESEARCH

Collage of What a Woman Needs to be Self-Sufficient

Activity Format
Staff made individual collages illustrating what a woman needs to be self-sufficient. Then, with colored sticker dots, specified if it was the staff provided support in the areas they noted as being important. The breakdown:
- Green dots = NH staff provides support in these areas
- Yellow dots = staff personally provides support in these areas
- Blue dots = areas that are not my responsibility to support
- Red dots = areas that are not NH's responsibility to support

Insights
This activity allowed for reflection and asked in more emotionally driven responses. They were able to articulate their goals and motivations as mothers and staff members more clearly than the previous activity. They have a deep desire to help the clients, but have yet to find the tools or strategies to help clients succeed.

Affinity Diagram of Core Competencies

Activity Format
Based on the collage activity the group identified overlapping ideas of needs and skills and made an affinity diagram with post-its on a sheet of butcher paper. The final groupings became the NH core competencies.

Insights
Looking for patterns and grouping was challenging for this group. We heavily led the categorization. Because of our strong influence during this activity, we repeated this exercise with the entire staff at a later date (see page 48).
Exploratory Research
Understanding Staff-Client Interactions, in Four Parts

Goal
Make conversations visible to get everyone on the same page and collect accurate information about daily operations and interactions.

Participants
Exploratory Research

Activity Format
We conducted this workshop in a round robin format. The staff split into small groups and rotated between three activities at 15 minute intervals, and a poster to which the entire house would contribute over time.

Station One
The first activity was to use post-its to describe a client’s entire journey while living at house on a timeline.

Station Two
The second activity asked the staff to use post-its to map what the client experiences during the first week at house on a timeline.

Station Three
The third activity used a house drawn on a piece of butcher paper to prompt discussion and labeling of where staff and clients interact and what they are typically talking about or doing together.

Poster
Last, we left a poster on the wall for the staff and clients to fill in over the course of a week, which was separated into the original set of six core competencies with the space to address “What does house do well” and “What could house do better?” for each core competency.

Insights
House has few and infrequent organized activities within the house that aren’t purely for entertainment. The staff has a difficult time reflecting on daily operations and communicating what the clients do daily. The staff have able to recall the most structure during the first week a client moves into house. The staff are unaware of what the clients are doing outside the house, specifically what the clients do in programming. The staff have differing opinions about what strengths and weaknesses.

Staff Research Activity Photos
2, page 29. Re-mapping Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs
3, page 30. Collages depicting what a woman needs to be self-sufficient
4-6, page 31. Initial affinity diagram of core competencies
7, page 32. Charting a client’s first week at house
8-9, page 33. Charting a client’s typical month through house
10, page 34. Identifying places in house where staff and clients engage
We developed a basic understanding of the goals, objectives and operations of the service organization, through our exploratory research activities which we identified as key insights:

- Employees did not have a clear sense of purpose, nor could they articulate their value or job description.
- While all employees could recite the mission statement of working to find women appropriate permanent housing, few could articulate how to support the women in that endeavor, or how women may be able to maintain that housing.
- Very few processes and procedures were followed uniformly and there is very little organizational or client history documented since the facility’s inception.
- Staff were able to identify client issues, but could not consistently identify solutions or appropriate times to address concerns.
- Further, there lacks a process or precedent for follow-up and measuring success of clients’ goals.

Key Insights
Card Sorting Interviews

**Goal**
- Learn who the clients are as individuals and begin to understand their circumstances.
- Learn about their perception of life and experiences, identify the life skills around which to focus our solution.

**6 participants**

**Activity Format**

Used flashcards and pictures to facilitate conversations as a method to make the session more friendly and casual as well as extracting information that might be hard to reflect upon if asked directly.

**set up to know you**

Clients have more picture cards in front of them choose chooses, flips it over and talks about it freely. Some examples include:

**Name your 10 best characteristics; my favorite time of the day/night is because; three things you want for your children; If I could introduce my child to any person or character it would be.**

**who are the people in your life**

Flash cards depicting a variety of individuals that could play a role in each woman’s life, including family members, community members, service providers, and health providers, were placed on the table for each woman to organize. Women then grouped the cards according to who is currently in her life. Women stated that they came to hsh for shelter, not to work on life skills and they were eager to become independent and leave the group home setting. Several complained about the format of the workshops and lectures they leave the house to attend. Some said there was interesting material but they don’t remember much of it.

**easy to hard tasks**

Flash cards depicted daily activities and life skills. Clients organized these on the spectrum of what is easy or hard for them to do, manage, learn, etc.

**Insights**

All the women named their children and other women in their lives as their support network and who they love. Several admitted to difficulties managing money and engaging their children in play or homework. All women wanted to live better than their children did. All the women stated they came to hsh for shelter not to work on life skills. It was difficult for them to think about the difference between something they did versus something they accomplished.

**reflection mailboxes**

3 participants

**Goal**
- We were interested to see if clients would use this format to reflect on one thing they do each day.

**Activity Format**

Clients had their own mailboxes that they decorated and kept in their rooms. Every day a staff member gave them a card with the prompts: “One thing I did today,” “One thing I accomplished today,” and “This accomplishment made me feel good because.”

**Insights**

One client completed a card once during the week-long trial, and another client completed three cards. Both staff and clients said they forgot because they kept the mailbox in their room and they were busy with other things. They also said it was too much writing. We learned that artifacts and activities need to be led by staff or else the clients won’t take the initiative to complete them, especially when there is no clear incentive. They felt it an instant bond with the mailbox and that it helped them decorate for their rooms. It was difficult for them to think about the difference between something they did versus something they accomplished.
We found that working with the clients was one of the most challenging aspects of this project and resulted in much less interaction with them than with the staff. However, the interviews provided insight into their diverse backgrounds and illuminated common challenges they faced. The challenges themselves provided insights about the client demographic:

- Many were incapable of keeping an appointment with us.
- Often when we were working with the clients their children were a distraction.
- Clients were reluctant to participate, knowing they were getting a “gift” helped with participation.
- Clients were skeptical about why we were there and what we were trying to do.
- Some were more willing to engage with us than others, but we did not form the rapport with them like we did the staff.
- Using props and cards was always more successful than just a conversation; however, there might have been something else we could have tried.
- Having two of us there may have intimidated them. We were advised that two people is helpful because clients may relate to one person more than the other, but it may have seemed overbearing.
- We were often at work during the day when the clients were out; it would have been beneficial for us to set a specific day and time to be at the house during a time that clients would be home.

Key Insights
Given these discoveries, it seemed premature to look at how to develop a mentorship program for 
shh and instead, more appropriate to investigate how to strengthen their current service offering. It was important to us to pursue this work utilizing a co-creative process, as Manzini says, to work with, not for, carefully considering the efforts already put forth, and using our abilities to see how we might amplify the work and current infrastructures in place (Manzini 2003, 8). Rather than build a new program from scratch we saw the opportunity to leverage much of the existing knowledge within to shift the focus to an important component of attaining permanent housing: developing the skills necessary to maintain that housing.

If we consider the service framework as a way to evaluate the existing service offering, and observe the evidence currently available to communicate to its customers their service offering, we can identify some glaring gaps. For example, the women develop a list of goals they want to work on when they enter the house. There are no visual reminders or aids on how to work towards these goals available in the house, and no objects for the women to possess that may inspire them to keep striving for self-sufficiency. They do have regular status meetings, however without some physical reminders, these goals become abstract ideas. Additionally the environment, while clean and safe, is sterile.

When considering the varying nature of each client, shh lacks the supports to allow their staff to successfully facilitate, and tangible evidence for the clients to clearly understand how to achieve their goals. As we moved into our next phase of research, our key directives for ourselves were to figure out how to strengthen their current service offering in ways that will still allow them to meet the goals set forth by their county funding and also the goals set forth by Adagio Health administration and our end goal.

A New Understanding

Service Framework

Through our research, we discovered opportunities for improvement or clarity throughout the service and the service delivery. We identified a variety of concerns that caused us to take pause and reconsider our end goal. We grouped our findings into four categories to create a service framework which include: Procedures, Knowledge Transfer, Culture and Adaptability.

Definitions

Adaptability: Making the tools and knowledge needed to timely adjust in order to maintain consistency through changing dynamics and varying situations.

Culture: The environment cultivated by interpersonal relationships and a shared vision.

Knowledge Transfer: Passing skills or information; can happen through various kinds of interactions, for example, a person engaging with an artifact or a person engaging with another person.

Living System: Dynamic system comprised of multiple integrated procedures and interactions, able to be flexible and change an necessary to support survival and growth.

Procedure: A prescribed set of steps that may include documents or other artifacts that are standard for certain situations, likely to accompany some form of documentation.


Service Framework

Procedures

• Clear and well articulated procedures
• Protocols for standard procedures are weak or absent
• Lack of consistent documentation
• Information in many places

Knowledge Transfer

• Unclear of client’s goals and progress.
• Opportunities to discuss programming with clients and coach not utilized.
• No artifacts available to facilitate Cliff coat coaching & learning engagements.
• Unclear how to access resources.

Adaptability

• Staff dynamic fluctuates with client population.
• Difficulty handling frequent emotional changes from clients.
• Do not clearly understand how to navigate boundaries.
• Service inconsistently delivered to clients.

Culture

• Mission statement is not actionable.
• No shared vision.
• Staff don’t know each other’s strengths.
• Jobs lack definition, thus expectations are unclear.
• Do not feel ownership of job.

This section is necessary for a balanced system, however shh is currently addressing these issues.
**Current**

**Procedures**
Through new structures, new management working to gain credibility and foster sense of team.

**Adaptability**
Challenges navigating boundaries to form appropriate relationships.

It appears that most staff members previously maintained peripheral roles within the service. Despite efforts to reorganize, roles are unevenly distributed. All this is leading to a service environment where clients, staff, and relationships between staff members and between staff and clients.

**Culture**
High that all are working toward a common goal.

**Knowledge Transfer**
Skill-based outcomes not established, thus difficult to measure.

**Current: State of Healthy Start House**

hsh is comprised of dedicated and caring staff that currently face challenges to deliver the service they intend. Lack of protocols and artifacts, unclear expectations, and no defined roles lead to staff confusion and uncertainty about how to invest themselves in their daily work.

**Future**

**Procedures**
Expectations clear and actionable.

**Adaptability**
Service is capable of flexible and changing as needed for growth or to accommodate new clients.

**Culture**
Shared vision for staff and clients.

**Knowledge Transfer**
Adaptable plan appropriate for each client continually implemented.

An ideal state for hsh is a service with actionable goals, providing its staff with the autonomy needed to comfortably deliver the service to clients under conditions of continual growth and change. New management would assume a peripheral role providing continued support for the service structure, leaving the service delivery as the primary responsibility of the staff.

With hsh currently undergoing change, the time is ideal to shift the focus of staff from permanent housing to the development of skills needed to attain and maintain housing. The Six Core Competency areas identified by the staff will guide the partnership moving forward. Our goals to continue working with the core partners to create appropriate practices, policies, attitudes, and tools to support the successful co-creation between staff and clients of their service.
GENERATIVE
RESEARCH
Narrowing Our Focus

Our approach to the generative research phase was shaped based on shifting our focus from developing a new arm of the service to developing supports within the current service structure. We aimed to investigate two areas, one being staff-to-staff interactions and internal processes, the other being staff-to-client interactions and processes.

The staff-to-staff service concepts addressed three sections of our service framework including culture, knowledge transfer, and protocol. In every monthly staff meeting we observed that the format for discussing client cases was more of a story swap than a discussion of issues and solutions. During each meeting the staff voiced their experiences and opinions, but no tangible summaries or plans emerged for how the staff were expected to deal with current issues. This resulted in fragmented communication between staff members and unresolved issues or unchanging statuses with clients.

Our goal for this section of the research was to test frameworks that provided structure to their staff meeting discussions as well as begin to integrate the core competencies into the client case discussions.

The staff-to-client service concepts addressed the need for adaptability, knowledge transfer, and protocol. We identified that the staff should be able to teach on the fly and through structured activities. Thus we tested a framework we referred to as an action plan, and sought to formalize those teaching-on-the-fly moments. We also investigated the contexts in which the staff might feel the most comfortable teaching structured activities.
**Formalizing the Core Competencies List**

**Goal**
- Engage the entire staff to generate an official list of core competencies.
- Build a sense of ownership and investment amongst the staff through participation.

**Activity Format**
Each staff member contributed at least ten skills a woman needs to support herself and her family. After writing each skill on a post-it note, the staff affinitized these, grouping the skills into larger categories. In order to finalize the affinity map into a final list of core competencies, the staff voted for the top three most important skills. Then they voted on the next three most important skills. The skills with the most votes became the final list of core competencies.

**Insights**
The format of the activity proved to be productive, efficient and successful for the staff. Key staff members were more quiet and often sat back and watched instead of actively contributing to meetings. By providing time for individuals to brainstorm and transfer their ideas to post-it notes, staff members had an opportunity to contribute their own ideas and the post-it notes created an equal platform for everyone to participate without being overshadowed. Thus, the staff created a forum for discussion how to categorize then came up with the final list of core competencies. This activity was valuable in that we engaged with a rich list of core competencies, but also discovered an activity format that encourages the staff to become invested in the new programming.

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**Formalizing Staff Meetings**

**Goal**
- Test our proposed framework for discussing client cases during a staff meeting.
- Develop aids for the staff to identify client issues and develop a plan of action that they can collectively execute.

**Manager and case worker, 2 participants**

**Activity Format**
In the first part of the activity we were testing a framework for discussing client cases during a staff meeting. To set the context, the manager was asked to give a verbal report on a client as she normally does during a monthly staff meeting. Next, she gave the report with a framework we provided on a handout. A debriefing discussion followed.

In the second half of the activity the participants were given various paper prototypes, such as a calendar, checklist and a decision maker dial, to develop an action plan based on a scenario we provided of a common client issue. The action plan is a five step process to help the staff identify a problem and then develop a viable strategy to solve the problem. A debriefing discussion followed.

**Insights**
In all, the activity format was unsuccessful. Staff only pointed out foreseeable problems with the staff using them. This activity relied on role playing and imagination, which the participants were not comfortable with. One participant might have reacted more favorably to our proposed framework if she saw the activities prior to our session and had time to reflect, rather than being asked to react in the moment.

Both parts of the activity were thought to be overly complicated. The action plan relies on critical thinking and follow through which the participants thought would be overwhelming for each staff member to champion on an individual basis. They recommended that tools for staff provide clear guidance and protocols, not open frameworks to develop a strategy.
The span of our generative research resulted in a narrowed solution space consisting of a staff-to-client service embedding the six core competencies. Specifically, we would develop the over-arching system, but also build out the core competency of money management. Staff-to-staff internal supports, such as a protocol for how to implement part of the service, would be a necessary component of the system, but it wasn’t the essence of the solution.

Reflecting on the activity format and results we were able to confirm some previous observations, we concluded that the staff desired tools to help them engage with the clients. Also, the staff were capable of applying critical thinking skills to a problem, but had difficulty executing a solution. In the implementation of the activity, we would make the tool more easily received and executable. For example using post it notes to create the core competency list, draft and simple tasks that they could complete by reflecting on past experiences rather than imagining the future. These artifacts and exercises helped determine possible forms that would be successful in a final solution for the staff’s use.

Drawing from insights of both exploratory and generative research, we wanted to ensure that our final solution preserved and fostered a future vision of core based off of key recommendations and principles. It was critical that our solution encouraged the client’s development of life skills, specifically budgeting skills, by empowering the staff to take a more proactive role in daily interactions. In tandem with this, we wanted to create tools and activities for staff to teach about saving and for clients to practice saving. Additionally, we wanted to foster the growth of the staff members’ skills and capabilities, staff will support each other in the constantly changing environment. Together they become more nimble in interacting with range of clients in appropriate ways. Ultimately, building a collective knowledge base of productive ways to engage clients. To maintain this growing rapport, small achievements are celebrated amongst staff and clients.
ideation
The ideation phase occurred in tandem with generative research – concepts would inform our research plan and results from research would often re-frame or refine our concept direction. The ideation phase encompasses the brainstorming sessions and rapid prototyping that led to the final service concept and supporting artifacts of our solution. The staff requested we focus on money management for this project. Ideation sessions started broadly, considering varying aspects of money management that needed addressing, and the ways in which both the client and staff would interact with the money management program.

Constraints and considerations for ideation sessions included: tools or supports for staff to aid in developing money management skills, tools or supports to increase the client’s success in money management, frameworks for on-the-fly teachable moments, and the ways in which both the client and staff would interact with the money management program.

Service Models to Consider

Given our aim was to develop learning modules around the core competencies we had to figure out the service model for delivering this knowledge. Currently in the house teachable moments occur sporadically in the context of the situation, although the manager’s long-term goal was to formalize the learning. We identified four different models that would guide the development of the service touchpoints and supports for both staff and clients.

Umbrella: This service model would implement a holistic curriculum that all clients participate in. It is the least flexible, but has the most integrated components and covers all of the core competencies.

Scaffold over time: This model would provide the staff with an open framework that would allow them to grow and evolve the service over time. This model encourages sustainability by focusing on ease of implementation so the staff can champion it before increasing their responsibilities.

Toolbox: This would include a breadth of learning modules for the staff to use as a client issue arises. Although the activities were structured, this model doesn’t have a blueprint for use over time. It is an as needed basis as determined by a staff member.

Menu: This model would provide the opportunity to engage in learning experiences that can be customized to a client’s individual needs and interests.

Ultimately, we chose the menu service model under the guise of the umbrella service model. The Dream Catcher provides the entire curriculum and the client has the freedom to choose which learning module to work on. Leveraging game mechanics and a reward system, if a client completes all the learning modules in a core competency then she is awarded a prize.

Service Blueprinting and Scenario Building

Developing service blueprints and customer journeys allowed us to consider the service holistically providing the ability to jump between a macro and micro level view from both the staff and client perspectives. During brainstorming sessions we would often propose tools or artifacts for one aspect of the system. Then we would insert it into a scenario of use to help us understand the role of this artifact, how it fits into the larger system and what other artifacts or touchpoints were necessary to execute the service.

The service blueprints helped to identify all artifacts and touchpoints necessary for the service, although by then we had created a modified blueprint that took on more aspects of a customer journey, highlighting needs and motivations coupled with artifacts and touchpoints.

System Components

We arrived at a system that incorporated the opportunity for the client to develop life skills, as well as embedded support structures that increase staff engagement with the clients while strengthening the quality of the service delivery. Our service proposed two components: the first component was the overarching theme, which would encompass all six core competencies.

At this point, that overarching learning program was to take the form of a resume as living document, a form that was always growing and changing with the client as she mastered various life skills. The other component is the curriculum system which would be nested within the primary system as a program centered around money management core competency. This would take the form of tracking and visualizing money to plan for the future.

Ideation on Money Management

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Refining the System

Service Blueprint
Concept, iteration 1
A Client’s Journey Through hsh

Concept, iteration 1

INTRODUCTION
• becomes a member of household, introduced to system of earning
• receives Strengths Finder Inventory, scrapbook; focus on six core competencies
• clients utilize these throughout their time at hsh

EARN CREDITS
• tasks assigned value (e.g., "debt") earned by living in the home
• overall based on quality of performance
• clients continue to follow resident handbook

EVALUATIONS
• weekly Talk Times scheduled with each client to discuss progress toward monthly goals, expectations about time left at home
• clients receive bimonthly currency evaluations of performance at every other Talk Time
• poor evaluations lead to more structured staff activities around budgeting

KEEPS S.F.I.
• keeps evaluations in Strengths Finder Inventory
• collages pictures, feelings, experiences about her time at hsh
• reflects on programming
• sets goals for herself
• records on prescribed worksheets

SAVES
• earn enough credit to pay off “debt” accrued by living in the home
• save and exchange for real cash, which hsh puts toward something the client wants to buy
• clients exchange saved credits for real cash toward purchase of wish list item
• Strengths Finder scrapbook reviewed
• invited back to talk about experience

MOVES OUT
• clients exchange saved credits for real cash toward purchase of wish list item
• through process of savings, cultured increase in self-esteem
• invited back to talk about experience
PROTOTYPES & EVALUATIONS
After several ideation sessions we developed the main components of the currency system. We developed tools and artifacts to facilitate discussion, reflection and documentation for the service to be co-created by client and staff. The tools also provided a structure and protocol to help the staff maintain consistent expectations in order to deliver a cohesive service.

We showed ten concepts to the entire staff. Due to time constraints we conducted the study in small groups. The whole group had similar responses and immediately understood the value that was possible by integrating new programming in the house to help with money management. Ultimately, this session helped us to narrow and simplify the system by eliminating some parts.

Additional concerns and comments during the activity:
- “If one person doesn’t like an idea it won’t work.”
- “Needs to be top down, doesn’t matter if we think it’s a good idea.”
- “Some people have a ‘My way or no way’ mentality.”
- “New idea might work well for a month, but then it might die out pretty fast.”

Our prototyping process helped us quickly refine and simplify our initial design solution. After outlining a sequence of use and the necessary artifacts, we role played using simple paper prototypes and walked through a scenario. We quickly found where we had created overly complex interactions and quickly went to work to simplify and streamline. We implemented a rough physical prototype within in two four days with one staff member and two clients, which substantially affected our final design.

In this early iteration, clients received their paycheck on Thursday night meetings, along with a bill summary outlining what they owed to hsh. It would be their job to deposit their checks as early as the “bank,” and then withdraw the needed amount to pay off their bill. The payment would be put into a payment envelope and submitted to a staff member.

We walked through a week in the life of a client, as it was her first week in our lab, using our labeled paper cut-outs, and quickly realized this entire sequence was much too complicated. The system was overly complex and there were too many touchpoints that did not serve a clear and useful purpose. The whole sequence of writing a check and bill chalk was an unnecessary component when it came to meeting our goals.

Proof of Concept

Speed Dating

Speed Dating

Getting paid after completing a task

The staff liked the idea of evaluating the clients and paying them immediately upon completion of a responsibility so they understood what they did or did not do well. Often the clients do a poor job with their responsibilities around the house, so the staff responded well to a payment system based on the quality of performance, just like in a real job. However, they mentioned that some of their responsibilities or requirements cannot be judged on quality. Arriving home before curfew, for example, either happens or it doesn’t. We would need a different way to account for this responsibility.
Prototypes & Evaluations

Public tracking systems

“The staff loved the concept of the tracking system being out in the open to create competition as a motivational factor. If it’s in their room both clients and staff will probably forget about it. The tracker would need to be in a place like the multi-purpose room to get the most use. Seeing it on the wall all the time might be an incentive to complete their responsibilities on time.”

Documenting activities in a scrapbook

“This concept was met with either enthusiasm or indifference. Staff thought using the scrapbook as a place to keep paperwork, documents, evaluations would serve a functional purpose because currently the clients often lose or throw away their paperwork. They also saw promise in the scrapbook acting as a mechanism to document progress over time. They all agreed that using it as a tool for reflection or note-taking would vary from client to client.”

03 PUBLIC TRACKING SYSTEMS

“All Together Now”

At the beginning of each month all of the clients have to pay within the house so that Money Maker goes down to $0.

When a client does choose a staff member again for 30 days papers are put on the Money Maker and seen by the client.

The client pays to the HPRF and asks the HPRF for $50 for a Money Maker and sees the client.

The tracker on the wall all the time might be an incentive to complete their responsibilities on time.

06 DOCUMENTING ACTIVITIES IN A SCRAPBOOK

“A Long and Winding Road”

Each client is given their own binder. It is split into sections, one for each week.

Each client adds information to their binder.

Also progresses the client writing down thoughts and reflecting on the progress they’ve made.

A staff member reviews the client’s progress and the binder is then assessed.
Wearing a Promise

The staff unanimously disliked this idea. They immediately saw problems around both the concept and proposed form it might take. The form was complicated and had too many parts. They said that clients would never wear something around their necks, especially when the topics are kept private by many clients. Although this wearable charm was meant as a non-verbal signal to guide the staff in how to engage with the clients, they all would prefer to just talk to the clients.

From our paper prototyping session, we drafted our first round of artifacts and thought about what form the client’s tracking device would take. We brought all these materials with us to teach the staff member who would become our champion. We developed our prototype as an abbreviated version of how a regular month would operate within the home. Our three participants included one staff member, and two clients. Our goal in the first day was to walk our staff member through the system and teach her the currency system worked. We then had her teach the system back to us, asking her to stop whenever she had questions or didn’t like something. During this time, we worked through using the client tracking device out loud with the staff member. We found through this teaching session, that the tracker we had prototyped did not map closely enough to what actions were being represented. We chose to move forward with a peg board idea and developed and built this prototype to implement the next day.

The following evening we took all the materials back to the home and observed the staff member as she separately taught two different clients who would test the system for the next three days. Client A is always compliant within the home and Client B is particularly non-compliant. She fielded questions and showed each client how to use the artifacts. Both clients seemed interested in participating. Staff asked each client what she would do with the “clunks,” the name of our currency during testing, or save them; both clients responded that they would bank and save, Client A responding, “I want to go get my own piggy bank.”

Physical Prototype with Users
Testing the Currency System

Goal
- Gain an understanding of how staff and clients engaged with the system, the artifacts and each other.
- Understand how many clients and how much work was done during the trial.
- Identify areas of the system that need improvement.

Participants: one “compliant” client, one “non-compliant” client, one staff member.

- Prototypes & Evaluations

Evaluation sheet was complicated and it was unclear how to complete.
- Our observations

Current feedback from the prototype test: one staff member and one client.

- Feedback from Client: the “compliant” client

Thought it was easy because she always does her chores. Because it was so easy, she thought it was an easy chore to complete. She reported that Client B was also easy to complete. She was happy with the system and thought it was a good way to help with chores.

- Feedback from Client: the “non-compliant” client

It was hard to remember to check in every day. Thought it was easy because she always does her chores. Because it was a new thing, she forgot to move her peg a couple of days.

- Feedback from Staff participant

Missing current system was a good idea, but didn’t see the connection between it and the evaluation sheet. She didn’t fill this form out immediately after a Responsibility was off on the amount so everyone is on the same page. She loved that the Banker’s Book was very clear and straight forward. Thought it was easy because she always does her chores. Because it is good competition.

- Current feedback:

The peg board was great because it helped to make her see how she was doing and she liked the charms to track her progress.

Putting the pegboard in a public space wasn’t a big deal because it is a good competition.

As for the overall system, she was confused a bit about the relationship of the peg to the clunks and when she stops moving her peg and starts earning real clunks.

- Our observations

Current feedback from the prototype test: one staff member and one client.

- Overall feedback:

Thought it was easy because she always does her chores. She did all of her chores. She was happy with the system and thought it was a good way to help with chores.

- Current feedback:

The peg board doesn’t motivate her. Her motivation is the opportunity to trade clunks for money at the end of her stay.

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Our solution needed to address our service framework, as well as help us meet a variety of goals set forth by the county and their administration. We found that opportunity in shifting the service concept from attaining permanent housing to developing the skills necessary to maintain that housing. To refocus the service, we created D.I.monds, which stands for Diggin’ Independence. D.I.monds is an embedded learning system with structured tasks and activities and rapid feedback cycles. Our solution focuses on creating structures and tools for the clients to learn and the staff to facilitate. We hypothesize that this system will not only sustain the administration’s goals, but also increase our rate of success in meeting the county goals, ensuring their continued funding.

System Overview

Within our service concept, D.I.monds, we have branded our core competencies as Gems. The goal is to collect all Six Gems by working through various learning modules. For the purposes of our thesis project, we chose to focus on what staff identified as the most important Gem, money management. The rest of our scenarios and artifacts are based on this competency as a model to show how the other Gems could be developed and implemented.

As each client works to collect all Six Gems, she will document her progress in her personal journal, called her Dream Catcher. As a living document, the Dream Catcher is a place to be expressive and reflective, and also act as a valuable resource when she leaves the home. The Dream Catcher also provides a tangible object around which to focus a discussion as a means to increase staff engagement in the clients’ daily learning.

Shift in Service Concept

County Goals
1. obtain permanent housing
2. obtain employment, job training, education

Healthy Start House Goals
1. increase staff engagement
2. measurable goals
3. develop metrics for success

Money Management Goals
1. earning
2. understanding debt
3. planning ahead
4. prioritizing

Six Gems
The Gems are the primary competencies identified by the staff that clients need to develop during their stay at HSH. Each month, the home will feature one Gem as the focus of the month. All clients work toward developing skills within this Gem.
The primary component of the money management Gem is Carbon, a currency system embedded into women’s daily operations. By moving into house, each woman agrees to participate. It supports four learning goals: earning, understanding debt, planning ahead and prioritizing.

At a high level, this is how Carbon works. A client moves in and a staff member introduces her to the Six Gems and to Carbon. She receives her Dream Catcher and an Welcome Guide that teaches her how to use Carbon. The staff member walks her through the three steps of the system.

First, clients earn. Each month, clients have a set amount they owe the house for things they would pay for if they lived independently, like electricity and food or other utilities. Clients pay for these expenses by completing tasks around the home they would normally be responsible for; in doing this, they earn house currency, which we’re calling Digs.

As clients work throughout each month, completing her daily, weekly and monthly responsibilities, both clients and staff track her progress using different artifacts. Each client uses her personal D.I. Tracker. This hangs publicly, providing a daily reminder of her progress and responsibilities, also allowing her to see how she is doing compared to the other women in the house.

Staff use Banker’s Book and Daily Progress Notes to track a client’s journey through each month and record of how much she’s earned for the month. These Progress Notes translate to her Skills Summary that the client receives semi-monthly, which she can file in her Dream Catcher.

In addition to her responsibilities, each client must complete four quests each month. These can be found in her Dream Catcher and are structured learning activities meant to parallel real life, that she would complete with

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**Carbon Currency System**

The primary component of the money management Gem is Carbon, a currency system embedded into women’s daily operations. By moving into house, each woman agrees to participate. It supports four learning goals: earning, understanding debt, planning ahead and prioritizing.

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Carbon
A Currency System to Practice Money Management

**Move in**
Staff teach clients about Carbon, the currency system
- Staff demonstrates how to complete tasks and provides feedback and support.

**Earn**
Fulfills responsibilities in exchange for Digs
- Client completes job and tasks on time and as assigned.

**Track**
Records progress toward financial obligations and goals
- Staff evaluates the quality of work to determine how many Digs to pay out.

**Save**
Meets financial obligations; continues to earn, banks earnings
- Client pays off monthly utilities in the house.
- Client saves Digs for rewards or uses them towards rent for permanent housing.

**Move out**
Clients apply knowledge and skills to real life
- Client comes back to share her story and provide support for the next clients.

**Additional Notes**
- **Earn**
  - Increased staff engagement
  - Increased metrics for success

- **Track**
  - Understanding debt
  - Measurable goals

- **Save**
  - Client is fined $45 dollars to help fund the Carbon currency system.
  - Client loses her Digs or if they are stolen.

- **Move out**
  - Client becomes a mentor for new clients.
If you don’t do a good job, you might not earn all the real dollars.

Responsibility

Being part of a community means you need to help out.

MONTHLY EXPENSES

- Miscellaneous, repairs, etc.
- Transportation
- Shared food
- Internet/cable/phone

If you fulfill your GOAL, you should not have any MONE Y M A N A GE ME N T Russia.

This Guide Book also shows staff how to take the information from the handbook guidelines.

SEMI-MONTHLY SKILLS SUMMARY SHEET

THE DAILY TASK PROGRESS NOTES

How am I doing?

DATE                  TO

CLIENT NAME

0  =  didn’t do it      1  =  needs more effort      2  =  great job

0  =  didn’t do it      2  =  complete

0  =  didn’t do it      2  =  complete

0  =  didn’t do it      2  =  complete

Note that the “Carbon Currency Daily Task Progress Notes” chart is not fully present in the image.

She maintains her room according to handbook guidelines. This shows you what “great job” looks like for the specific responsibility, “She maintains her room.”

STAFF'S LITTLE GUIDE BOOK

EARN

STAFF COMPLETES, GIVES TO CLIENTS

DATE FOR WEEKS                 TO

NAME

NO FOOD PRESENT

CLOTHES ARE PUT AWAY

BED IS MADE

STAFF ATTEND Case management meetings, twice per month.

She does her daily/weekly chore.

She schedules and attends case management meetings, twice per month.

She makes dinner when it’s her turn.

She attends weekly client meetings on time.

She maintains her room according to handbook guidelines. This shows you what “great job” looks like for the specific responsibility, “She maintains her room.”

STAFF ATTENDS Client meetings on time.

RULE BREAKERS

• No food present
• Clothes are put away
• Bed is made

STAFF BREAKS Smoking policy:

0–2 = every violation
4 = complete
-5 = every violation

DATE

NUMBER OF TIMES

WEEK 1

WEEK 2

NAME

YESTERDAY

TO

TODAY

WEEK 1

WEEK 2

DATE FOR WEEKS                 TO

DATE

STAFF BREAKS Smoking policy:

0 = didn’t do it      1 = needs more effort      2 = great job

0 = didn’t do it      2 = complete

0 = didn’t do it      2 = complete

0 = didn’t do it      2 = complete

Note that the “Carbon Currency Daily Task Progress Notes” chart is not fully present in the image.
This is a two-sided worksheet created for staff to use as a simple daily tool to help them track clients’ activity each day. The Banker’s Book is on the backside, and is essentially a ledger which allows the staff to track how much each client has earned over the month, and also the client to see that she agrees on the running total.

### Daily Task Progress Notes & Banker’s Book

**Carbon Currency**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Weekly Task Progress Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Weekly Punctuality</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Around the House</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Mastering the Gems</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>Rule Breakers</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BANKER’S BOOK</th>
<th>CLIENT NAME</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>AMOUNT EARNED</th>
<th>INITIALS</th>
<th>RESIDENT</th>
<th>SAVINGS TO DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- **Weekly Punctuality**
  - She attended weekly client meetings on time.
- **Around the House**
  - She paid rent on time.
- **Mastering the Gems**
  - She completed 3 out of 4 monthly quests.
- **Rule Breakers**
  - She grows her Dream Catcher, adding a minimum of two entries by each progress cycle.

### Semi-monthly Skills Summary

**How am I doing?**

1. **Weekly Punctuality**
   - She attended weekly client meetings on time.
   - She scheduled and attended case management meetings, twice per month.

2. **Around the House**
   - She paid rent on time.
   - She did her daily/weekly chore.
   - She makes dinner when it’s her turn.
   - She maintains her room according to the handbook guidelines.

3. **Mastering the Gems**
   - She grows her Dream Catcher, adding a minimum of two entries by each progress cycle.

4. **Rule Breakers**
   - The days she missed curfew.
   - The days she broke the smoking policy.

Clients review these every other week at client meetings to see how they have been doing in the home. It is meant to provide feedback and motivation, so that clients can see how they are doing over time. Clients can file these forms in their Dream Catchers to see how they have grown or maintained behaviors over time. Hopefully staff will use the comment spaces on the forms to provide useful notes for the client so she knows where she could improve or ask for help, or what things she’s doing really well.

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The D.I. Tracker is each client’s personal tracking device. It is displayed in a public location where clients see their own progress, and each other’s, on a daily basis. Clients move a peg to track their earnings for the month and also display any charms they earn. The D.I. Tracker also tracks how many quests they have completed within the month.

Digs are the currency. This is what clients work to earn throughout the month. Until they earn the 100 they owe each month, they don’t get to collect the actual currency to save for the future.

Money Management Quests

The main components of money management that we will focus on are:

- Budgeting
- Paying Bills
- Prioritizing Purchases

Work with a staff member to do each money management quest below. Each quest has a matching worksheet to keep in your Dream Catcher. Once you have mastered a quest, cut it out and paste it on the worksheet to show that it is complete. Complete all 9 quests to master money management and add a Gem to your collection.

What is Money Management?

Being able to manage your money means a lot more than just getting a paycheck. It is being creative with what you have and finding new ways to stretch your income. It means making some sacrifices now in order to be more comfortable later. And it means thinking about the future and how you will provide for your family not just today or this week, but several years down the road.

Managing your money allows you to feel safe and secure, and empowered to live your life.

Using these skills on the job:

- An accountant keeps track of a company’s money. They make reports of how much the company is spending and saving each year.
- An administrative assistant can calculate how much money her company has earned from sales and prioritize what additional supplies she needs to order.

Collecting the Money Management Gem means you can:

- Consistently pay your bills and rent on time
- Make a plan to pay off your debt and with regular payments
- Be a smart shopper, always on the look out for sales and coupons
- Prioritize purchases based on your family’s needs

This is essentially a structured scrapbook. It is divided into six sections which correspond with each Gem. The Dream Catcher contains structured activities and pages for clients to collage, draw, and write to capture thoughts, feelings, and learning experiences. This is also meant to be a place where clients can store handouts and any notes from other kinds of programming they attended during their time at the center.
In keeping with our co-design practice, we hung a poster inside our co-design space to ask for suggestions for our naming. What words did the clients associate with “money”? One client listed “diamonds” which she reiterated during our prototyping training session. Without wanting to reinforce a material culture, we hesitated using this as a name within the system, until our adviser pointed out that we should consider a different spelling. Could we think of an embedded acronym? “Diggin’ Independence” came out of this discussion, with the over-arching title of “D.I.monds.” To keep with this theme, we named the core competencies “Gems,” which conceptually fit. Women will collect the Gems which is representative of them developing core competencies. Colors were selected to reflect bold gem tones. The typeface, Ithôrnit, was selected because of its feminine, bold, and edgy characteristics. This is complemented by the legibility and structure of Univers for text.
reflections & conclusion
The research conducted in this project was key in helping us understand our landscape, and appropriately scope and frame our work. Adler’s initial request to build a mentorship program assumed a few key points that we discovered early in our work. Building a mentorship program implied that learning or guidance would continue from a previous state of learning; it assumed that the service provided a significant amount of guidance and introduction to the women living at the home, and that the women wanted continued support. We did confirm that previous clients definitely desired continued support from voice and the staff, but we also saw many opportunities for ease to strengthen the service it was already providing.

Rather than design and develop an entirely new support program for clients no longer living in the home, potentially requiring new funding, resources and at least one dedicated staff member, in addition to recruiting and training a fleet of mentors, we saw ample opportunities for continued support from the women while they live within the home, they may improve their success rate in meeting the goals set forth by the county, which would help ensure their continued funding each year. Additionally, by clarifying the service concept and the roles of each stakeholder involved, we saw the creation of new goals and more frequent contact for the staff and clients to focus shared growth experiences. Our final direction proved to be a very positive step in the right direction to improve the women’s journey. Feedback from staff and clients included that the non-compliant client is still more engaged with her household duties, and displays a more positive attitude. Additionally, behavior has sustained since we conducted a trial run of Carbon.

Although the concept has been a success in the eyes of leadership, we have not yet identified outcomes for the women living in the home, it would be difficult to ascertain or develop outcomes for women living independently participating in a mentorship program. The management and administrators agreed with the assessment that it was premature for new to develop an additional program and support the shift to focus on core service offering. In addition to clarifying and strengthening the services and resources already in place, two highly beneficial opportunities surfaced: by focusing on the services we provide to the women while they live within the home, they may improve their success rate in meeting the goals set forth by the county, which would help ensure their continued funding each year. Additionally, by clarifying the service concept and the roles of each stakeholder involved with the women, you saw the creation of new goals and more frequent contact for the staff and clients to focus shared growth experiences. Our final direction proved to be a very positive step in the right direction to improve the women’s journey. The Dream Catcher should also be extended to all Six Gems. Given the management’s limited time and budget we designed much flexibility into this scrapbooking system so existing resources and learning modules could be pulled and included. We strongly recommend that voice obtain expertise from an educator to ensure the clients practice the correct learning goals and that the staff are capable of leading the engagements.

At the closing of our exploratory research we developed a service framework and identified areas that should be resolved to fully support voice to meet the county goals and support the clients in meeting their personal goals. Our limited time and bandwidth, we narrowed our scope to building the Carbon currency system, however, additional areas of the service should eventually be addressed. For example, staff monthly meetings still do not have any structure for the ways in which client cases are discussed. While we created a client evaluation form in attempt to circumvent this issue, a framework for the next round of the workshop to get all the staff on the same page and provide action items to guide them in their interactions with clients throughout the month.

Additionally through our increased understanding of the staff and client dynamic, we know that D.I.monds will be most successful if championed by a primary staff member with consistent follow through. D.I.monds was met with great enthusiasm, but these initiatives can quickly lose traction. We needed more time to collaboratively produce a more fleshed out prototype to live in the voice for a longer span of time. Reflecting on this experience our most significant takeaway is that true co-design takes time, patience, consistency and extensive planning. Arriving at an appropriate solution would not have been possible had we not “lived” with the staff and clients at voice. Ideally, we would have spent the entire summer building a deeper rapport with both staff and clients prior to designing our research plan, which might have put us in a better position to develop richer solutions and test additional prototypes. Spending quality time with stakeholders and making an effort to establish a common ground between the designer and user is key requisite to participatory design.
Ultimately, this project focused on how design can amplify established efforts through participatory design. Research dictated that building on hsh’s current resources and strengths to ensure their sustainability made more sense than developing an entirely new arm of the service, requiring additional time, funding and manpower. We applied what we learned about co-design in two primary ways: we looked at how service providers could shift to become facilitators and what needs they may have to do this. Because each client is so different and comes to see with different life experiences and circumstances, it is crucial that the staff become facilitators as opposed to highly scripted and mechanized processors with standardized outcomes. They must have frameworks and tools they can adapt to fit the changing needs of each client, and also allow them to consistently deliver the service to meet their core goals and outcome criteria. As design practitioners, we are not content or experiential experts on the subject of homelessness, thus it was important for us to partner with domain “experts”. Through jointly participating in research activities, we elicited needs, desires and ideas out of our users; this was significant in the framing of our problem and the execution of our concept and solution.

As designers, evidence became a crucial part of this solution. Understanding how environment played a role in our project was harder to see until toward the end of our process. We learned that in this context it was less about the physical space and more about the culture and emotional climate. We had little flexibility and leverage in making recommendations about the physical space, but we worked hard to understand how we could adjust the environment in other ways. Tools and clear processes encourage staff to execute the service in a way that is comfortable for them, but also standardized to meet a unified end goal or vision. We are attempting to foster positivity by changing the focus to achievements and realistic rewards, to encourage behavior change and emphasize things done well as opposed to mistakes and poor choices.

In the end we did not practice true co-design, but rather participatory design in that the stakeholders had direct influence and voice on what the solution might be; however they were not the ones driving the process or developing the artifacts. As designers increase their engagement in social innovation issues, it would be very beneficial to survey several case studies to continue the discussion of when it is appropriate to engage in co-design versus participatory design and identify what that spectrum might look like.

To date, designers working in the area of social innovation for services strive to start small, practicing a common principle of designing with, not for. Throughout our process we focused on designing the most appropriate solution for our participants. Literature covers how to adapt methods to children, but not necessarily to our demographic of the underserved, which needs to take into consideration varying educational backgrounds, but also show respect to a range of life experiences. We want to thank Adagio Health and Healthy Start House for providing us with a rich learning experience and we hope the design community will continue to work in this intersection of service and social innovation in order to improve the quality of life.

Finally, our research methods and plans were largely participatory, and we did our best to be flexible and creative in the ways we developed and adapted activities to make them fun and productive experiences for our participants. Literature covers how to adapt methods to children, but not necessarily to our demographic of the underserved, which needs to take into consideration varying educational backgrounds, but also show respect to a range of life experiences. We want to thank Adagio Health and Healthy Start House for providing us with a rich learning experience and we hope the design community will continue to work in this intersection of service and social innovation in order to improve the quality of life.
References


Appendix 96

Carnegie Mellon University

Description of IRB Approval

To: Kelly Hall, Raymond Street, Kristina Hughes

From: David Evans

Date: February 3, 2011

Re: IRB: Living Systems and Adaptil's Healthy Start House

This is to notify you that your modification request satisfied on January 31, 2011 is included in a change in study design and consent form was approved on February 3, 2011 by the regulatory board. You should not be concerned that additional changes are in the manner. These changes will be reviewed prior to implementation. Please refer to the above referenced protocol number in all correspondence regarding this protocol.

Approvals for the study expires on September 1, 2011.

Please call the Research Regulatory Compliance office at 412-268-3201 if you have any questions regarding the memo. Thank you.

David Evans, Ph.D., IRB Chair

Carnegie Mellon University

Research Regulatory Compliance

1405 indoor

Registration No: 0660039

IRB Review:

Date: February 3, 2011

IRB Review:

Date: February 3, 2011

All Study Participants

(Figure 1)
### Comparing Transitional Housing Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Provider</th>
<th>Clients</th>
<th>Length of stay</th>
<th>Housing</th>
<th>Programming - on or off site?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Start House</td>
<td>women with children, pregnant or postpartum</td>
<td>18 months</td>
<td>house</td>
<td>on-site by staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pittsburgh, PA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>in units</td>
<td>parenting, life skills, financial, stress mgmt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millicent Transitional Housing</td>
<td>families</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>apartments sponsored by diff churches</td>
<td>off-site - volunteers Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas City, MO</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>on-site</td>
<td>Budget Counselor - 1/week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillcrest Transitional Housing</td>
<td>families</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>apartments sponsored by diff churches</td>
<td>life skills - 2 times/3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>on-site</td>
<td>Life Management classes are single sessions and must be completed within the first 30-60 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional Housing Incorporated</td>
<td>women children can visit</td>
<td>24 months</td>
<td>apartments</td>
<td>Off-site - community services, employment training, and educational opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>on-site</td>
<td>Building Blocks for Success: Education, accountability and support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEARTH</td>
<td>women with children, must have GED or high school diploma</td>
<td>20 months</td>
<td>apartments</td>
<td>On-site - substance abuse support, referrals to services such as counseling, child care, and substance abuse treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>on-site</td>
<td>Substance setting with access to city and county services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethlehem Haven</td>
<td>women</td>
<td>24 months</td>
<td>apartments</td>
<td>On-site - Drug and Alcohol meetings, Women’s Empowerment meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Life Skills classes once a week for 9 weeks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Job training/life skills services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Provider</th>
<th>Clients</th>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Programming</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enterprising Kitchen</td>
<td>women</td>
<td>manufactures natural soap and lip products</td>
<td>work in all aspects of the enterprise: manufacturing, customer service, shift logistics, assembly, production, as well as shipping and receiving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FareStart</td>
<td>men &amp; women</td>
<td>restaurant/food prep</td>
<td>trains people to practice professional work skills and attitudes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle, WA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Woof</td>
<td>youth</td>
<td>dog daycare</td>
<td>provides job training to give youth a foundation from which to build assets, gain experience and financial skills, and move into jobs at career轨迹, regardless of the prior challenges they faced. Employment and productivity is the goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland, OR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>youth</td>
<td>dog daycare</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland, OR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby Bud’s</td>
<td>single moms and women in transition</td>
<td>retail &amp; cleaning services</td>
<td>Baby goods thrift store and commercial cleaning services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denver, CO</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional notes:
- Enterprising Kitchen in Chicago, IL produces natural soap and lip products, providing work in various aspects of the enterprise including manufacturing, customer service, shift logistics, assembly, production, and shipping and receiving.
- FareStart in Seattle, WA offers restaurant/food prep training, focusing on professional work skills and attitudes.
- Virginia Woof in Portland, OR provides dog daycare services, aiming to build assets, gain experience, and financial skills.
- Baby Bud’s in Denver, CO specializes in retail and cleaning services, assisting with baby goods thrift store and commercial cleaning.

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Additional details provided in the tables include the length of stay, housing type, and various programming details such as on-site and off-site activities, community services, life skills, and substance abuse support.
Stakeholders of HSH

- Residents
- Staff
- Family
- Friends
- Community groups
- Employers & educators
- Workshops & instructors
- Psycho/social & community services
- Child’s caseworker
- Resident’s caseworker
- Government funding
- Adagio Health Administration
- Foundation funding