

The background is a textured, light-colored surface with a collage of various floral and nature illustrations. There are several daisies with yellow centers and white petals, some with green leaves. A dragonfly with a green body and white wings is positioned near the top center. There are also some abstract floral shapes and patterns, including a large yellow sun-like flower in the top right corner. The overall style is hand-drawn and artistic.

The Story of Direct Healing Action

Our Journey through the Innovation Pipeline



the incubator hub by
Healthy Teen Network





OUR INNOVATION JOURNEY



Direct Healing Action

This is the story of our innovation journey through the Healthy Teen Network Incubator Hub pipeline.

September 2024
- June 2025



INTRODUCING...



Angie
Tamayo Leon



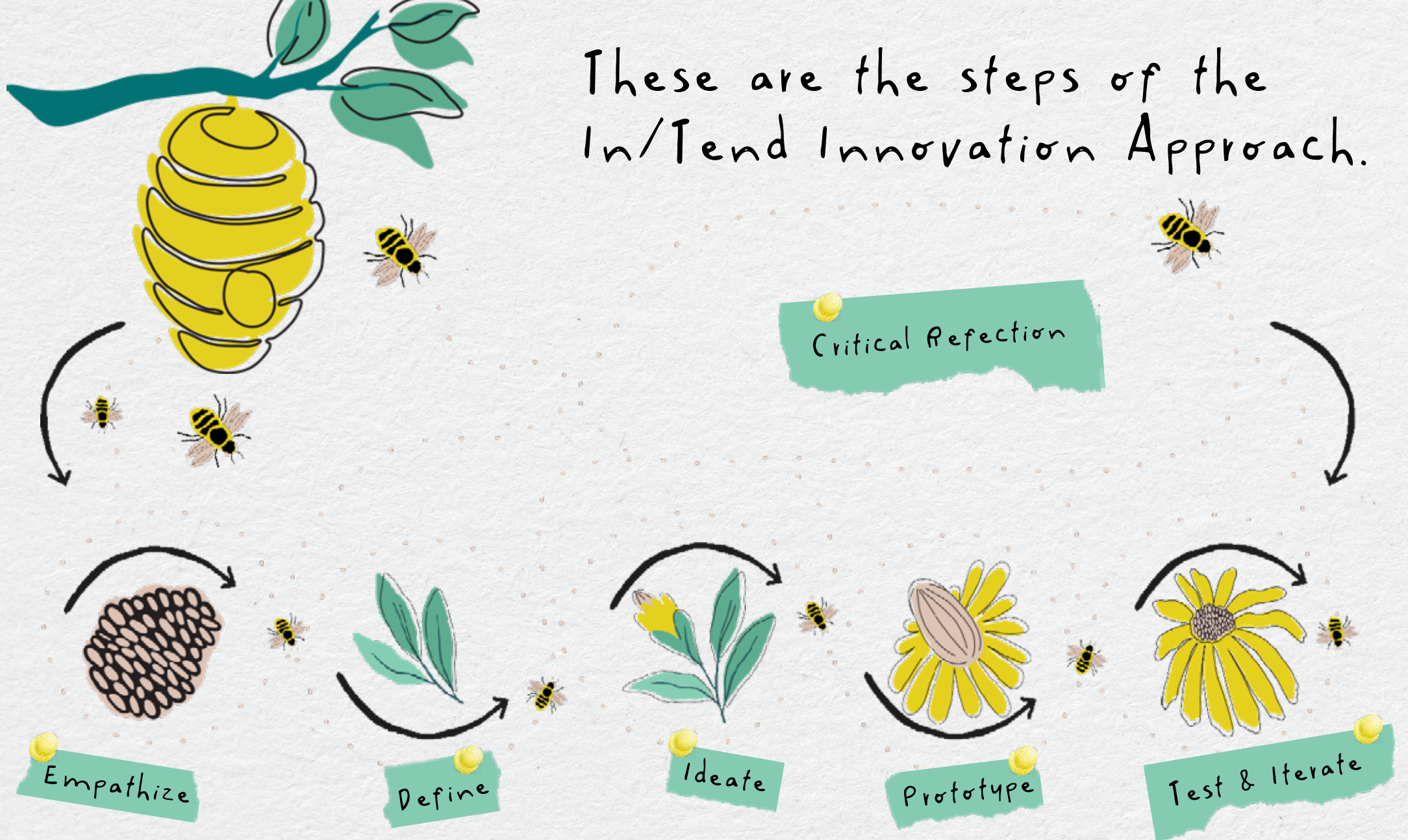
Shalisa
Peterson



Julia
De Jesus

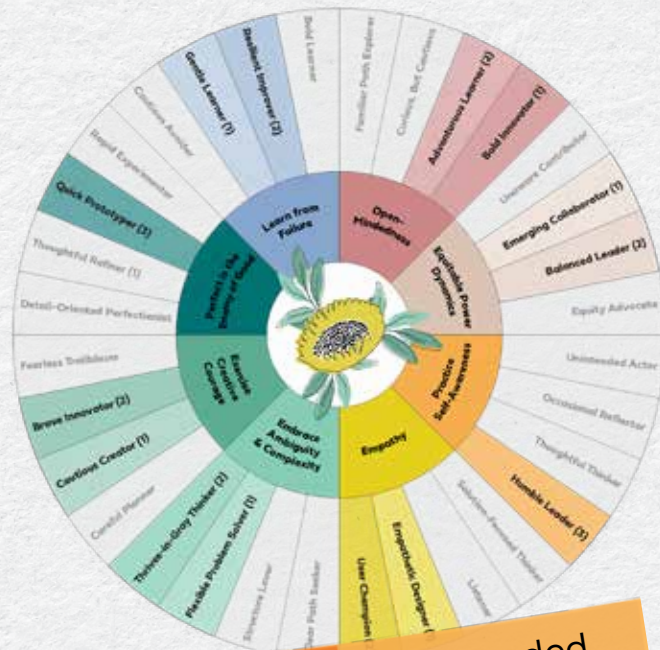


These are the steps of the In/Tend Innovation Approach.



We assessed our team's innovation capacity.

Critical Reflection



How it started...

We unpacked our underlying perspectives, unspoken norms, and structural influences.

How it ended...

Initially, our challenge was...



Empathize

Many young adults aged 18-24 struggle to find accessible sexual health information that is reliable, trustworthy, and factual that empowers them to make informed decisions about their bodies.

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Experiences

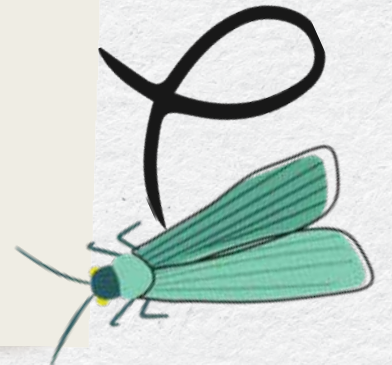
We conducted analogous, or similar, experiences to gain insights.



North Hudson Islamic Educational Center, Union City, NJ

We found inspiration and fresh ideas in different contexts and situations.

We attended a Masjid at the North Hudson Islamic Educational Center and spoke to an Iman and asked about sexual health information and resources.





Austin Public Library, Austin, TX



We went to the Austin Public Library and asked librarians about how to find sexual health resources. We noted different responses depending on why we asked (research purposes versus personal reasons).

Empathize



Our end users are...



YOUNG ADULTS, AGES 18-24

"Generally, in church, confession was not good for me in terms of my view of sex. I think that was the biggest impact on me when I was growing up."

"Social media is a blessing and a curse, where it is great for promoting facts but also bad for misinformation, they note that youth are getting less sex negative due to social media."

"OMG. Because of all the fear, I didn't think I was ready until I was 19-20 and I was in college, and it was my first relationship."

We also interviewed beneficiaries and experts (they bring valuable perspectives), such as:

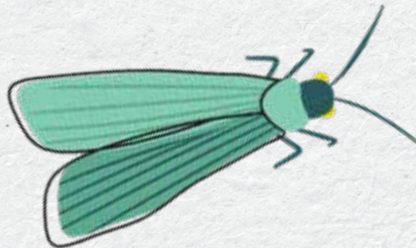
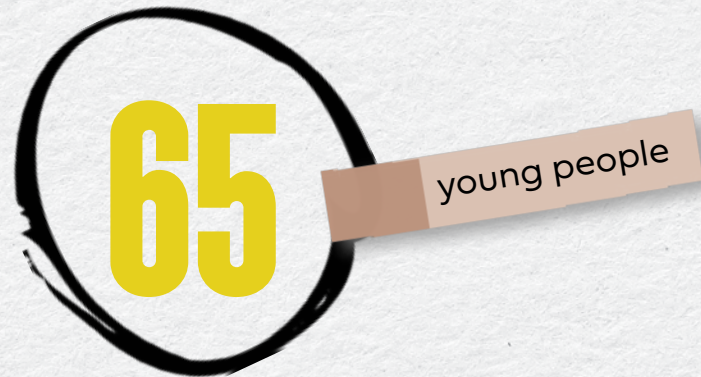
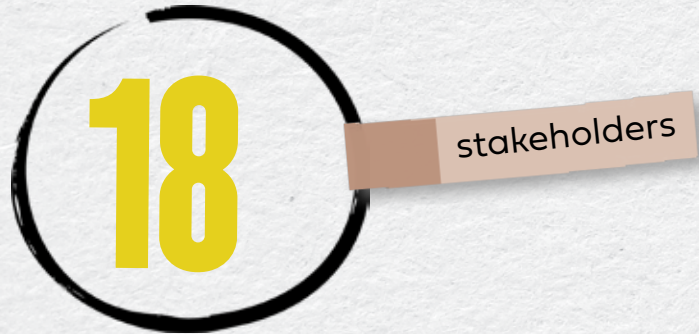
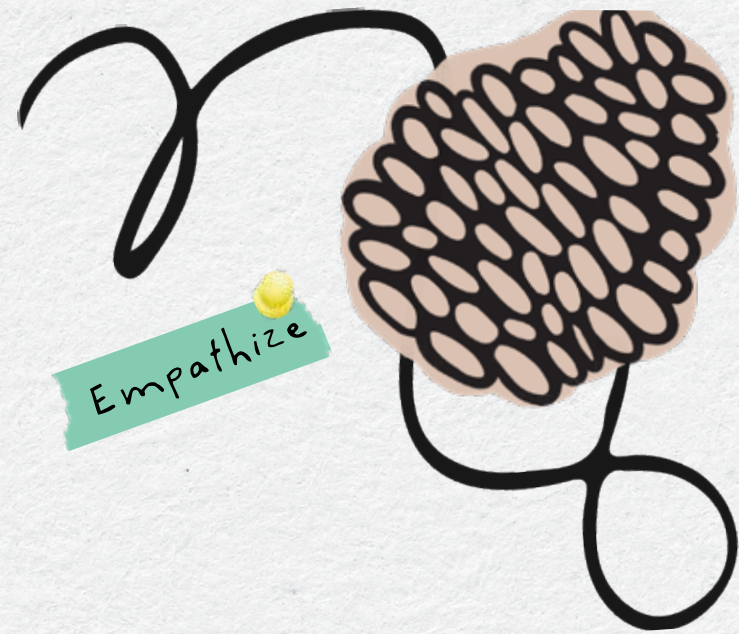
- parents of young people
- educators
- policymakers and analysts
- school administrators and counselors
- higher education professionals
- middle schoolers

We learned more about our end users.

Empathize



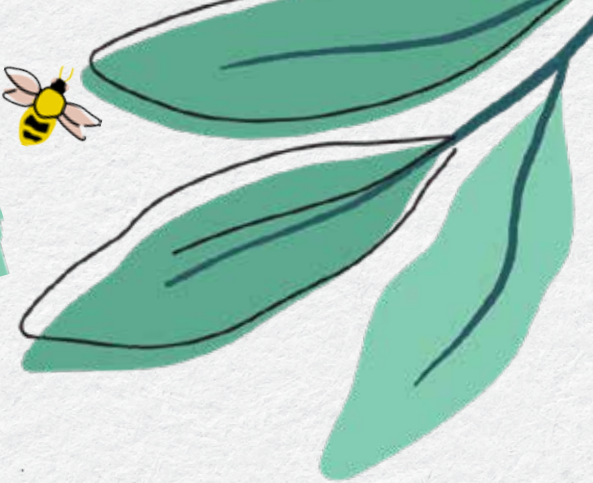
By talking with people, we learned more about our **end users' needs**.



We took the stories, mixed in some data, and uncovered the learnings that **mattered most to form our insights.**



Define



Many young people's ongoing sex ed experience is filled with fear-mongering language and misinformation, which they will then perpetuate onto future generations if their beliefs are never challenged.

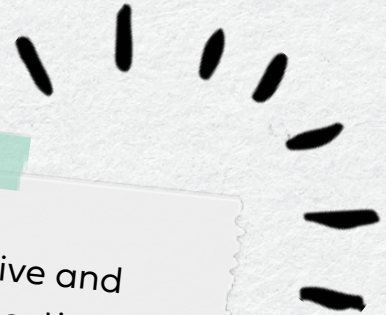
Young adults are more exposed to sex-related content through media, but they lack the health literacy skills to differentiate between entertainment and reality.



Based on what we learned, we **refined our challenge**, which is summarized by our question:

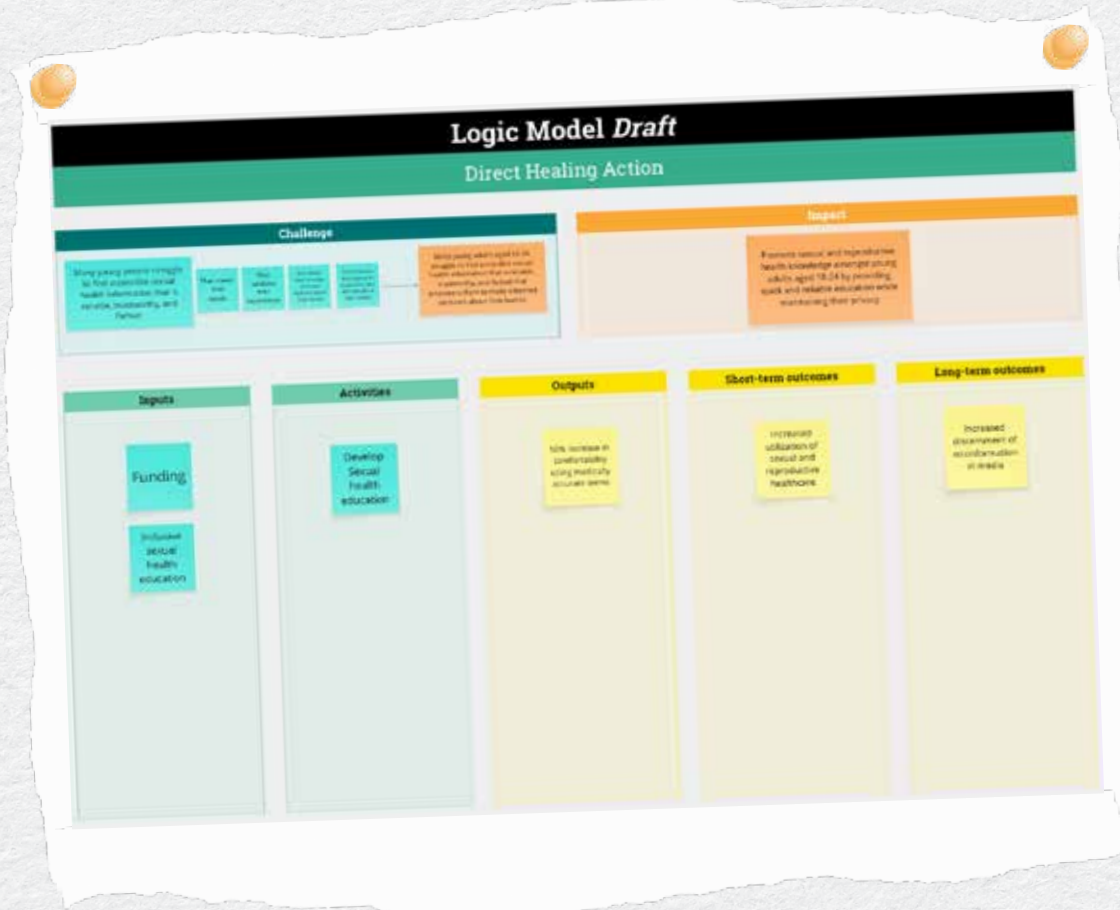


How might we create positive and medically accurate sex education experiences for young people ages 18-24, so they will pass on reliable information to their communities?



We drafted an initial logic model, identifying our goal, inputs, outputs, and activities.

Define



We generated many ideas.

Physical tool kit where end users would be able to select the items they want (e.g., menstrual products, emergency contraception, condoms, workbooks or pamphlets on sexual health topics, reflection cards, uterus model)

A website with a multitude of programs, resources, educational materials, and games that are accessible and reliable

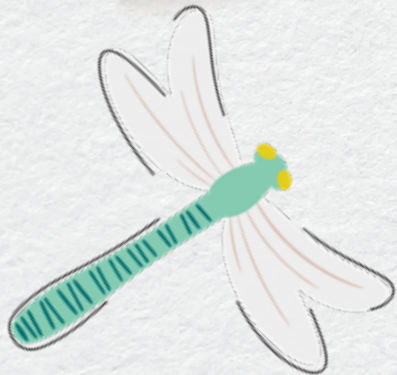
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Ideas

Ideate

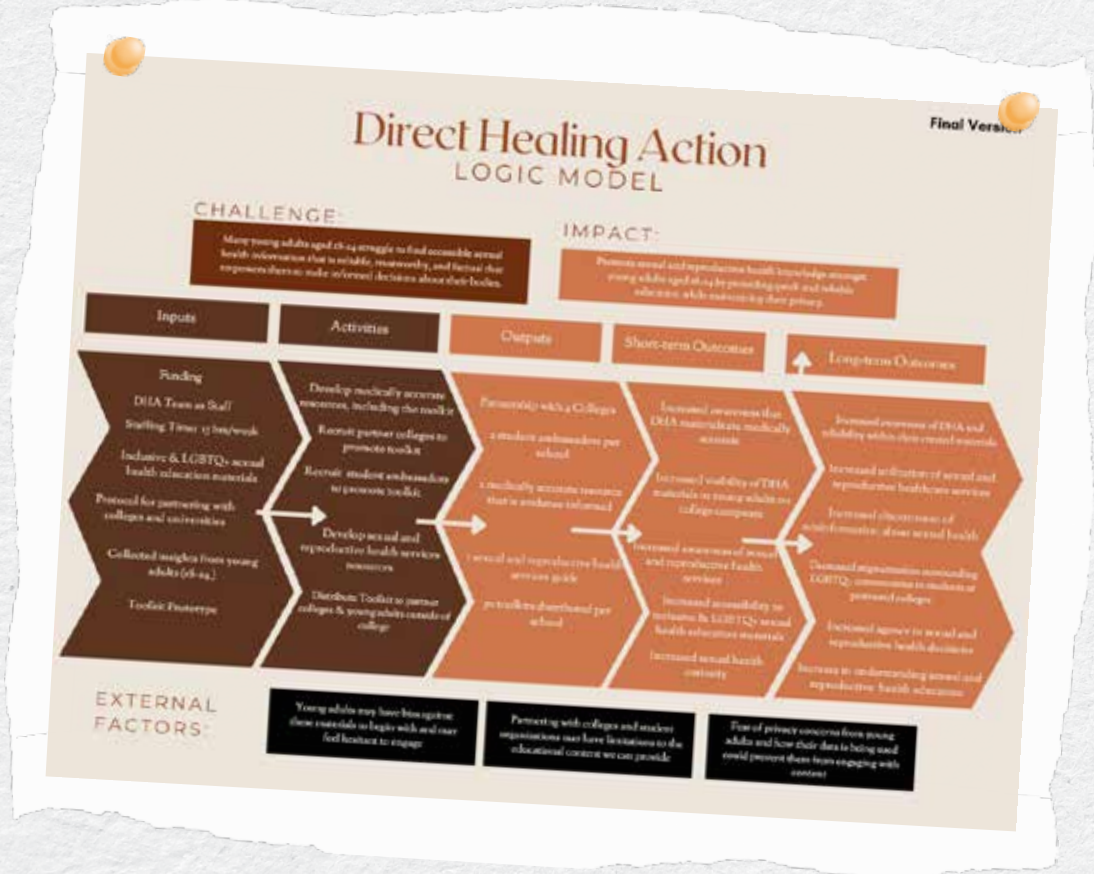
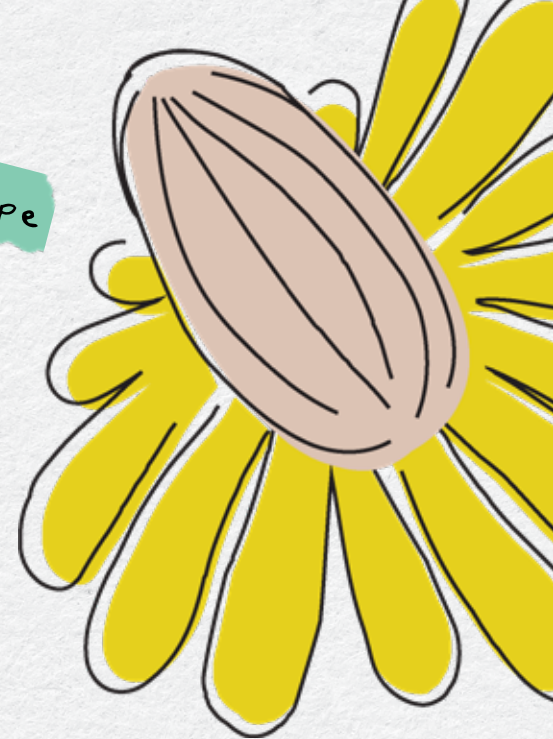
We selected an idea to test.

toolkit



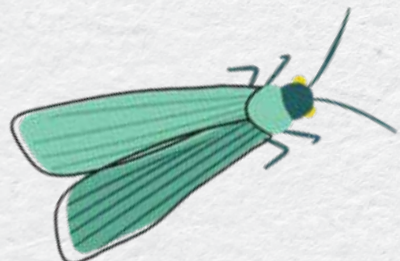
Based on our journey so far,
we revised our logic model.

Prototype



We tested the prototypes with 3 end users and learned what worked and what needed tweaking.

Test & Iterate



We learned some key takeaways from user testing.

End users gave us insight into different products and educational topics to highlight including hygiene and STIs as well as products for traditionally dismissed demographics in the sexual health education space, like men.

End users will pay for the toolkit for a range of \$15-\$50. Need to decide how we will price the toolkit (per item vs package).

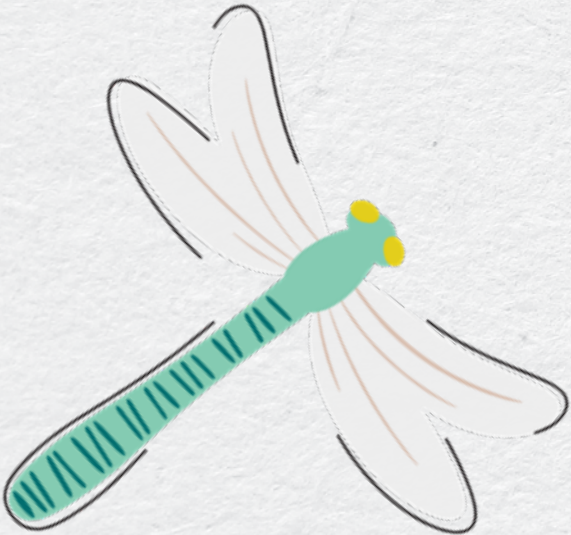
Test & Iterate

Provide more information about the purpose of each product. They liked being able to select items without the restrictions of pre-made options.



We defined success for our innovation journey as...

Any kind of progress in this prototype that is still rooted in our vision to educate and empower young adults.



We're excited for our next steps!




Apply for further funding through incubators, accelerators, and hybrid programs


Continue testing our prototype with end users and beneficiaries

Create a one-pager and work portfolio that is easily accessible for interested funders





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In/Tend is a vibrant ecosystem of dreamers, doers, and change-makers who push the boundaries of imagination in adolescent health.