

The Story of
Young Parents:
Stigma to Strength

Our Journey through the Innovation Pipeline



the incubator hub by
Healthy Teen Network





OUR INNOVATION JOURNEY



Young Parents:
Stigma to Strength

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

September 2024
- June 2025



INTRODUCING...



Kiria
Johnen



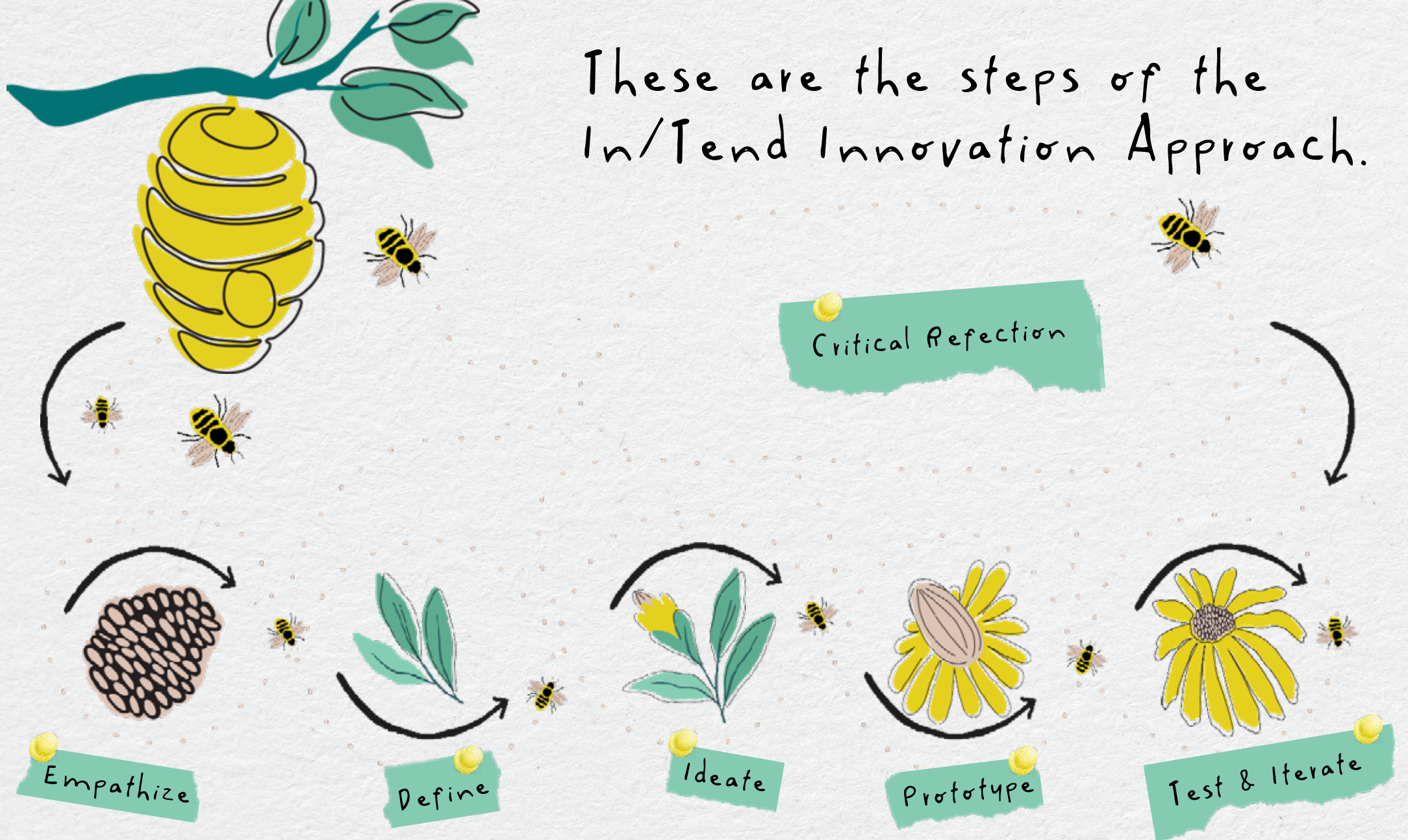
Liz
Burnette



Kate
Westaby



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



We assessed our team's innovation capacity.



How it started...

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



Critical Reflection



How it ended...



Initially, our challenge was...

How can we improve the healthcare experiences of young pregnant and parenting individuals?

Empathize

2

Experiences

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

McBride's Guns,
Austin, TX

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

We visited McBride's Gun store to give us an idea of what it feels like to enter a space uncomfortable to us. We didn't know what types of questions to ask. It was a great analogous experience to young parents in healthcare spaces.

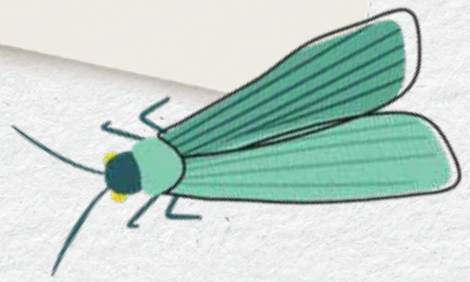
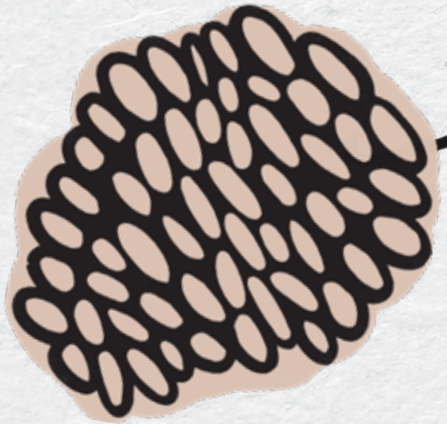


Empathize



Hibachi restaurant,
Madison, WI

We went to a hibachi restaurant to help gain a better understanding on how environments can build trust and community.



Our end users are...

- young parents and their families (partners, parents/grandparents)
- healthcare providers
- social service support workers
- teachers and educators

"They [doctors] feel like they have the final say over you, and so they try to push whatever they want to happen, whatever they think should happen onto you."

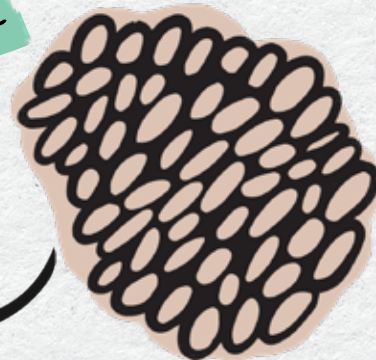
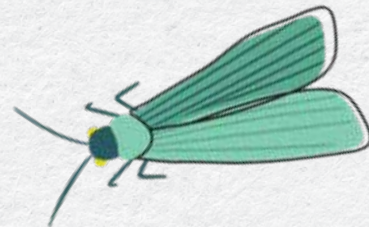
"On my chart, obviously it says that I've had a child. I was at the ER... the doctor came in and said that I was too young to have a child. I had already had [DAUGHTER] and everything. She was already past a year old, and he was like, "Yeah, you're too young to be having children, aren't you?" I just laughed it off because I didn't know what else to say. She's already here. I don't know what you want me to do...I don't know how to respond to that."

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

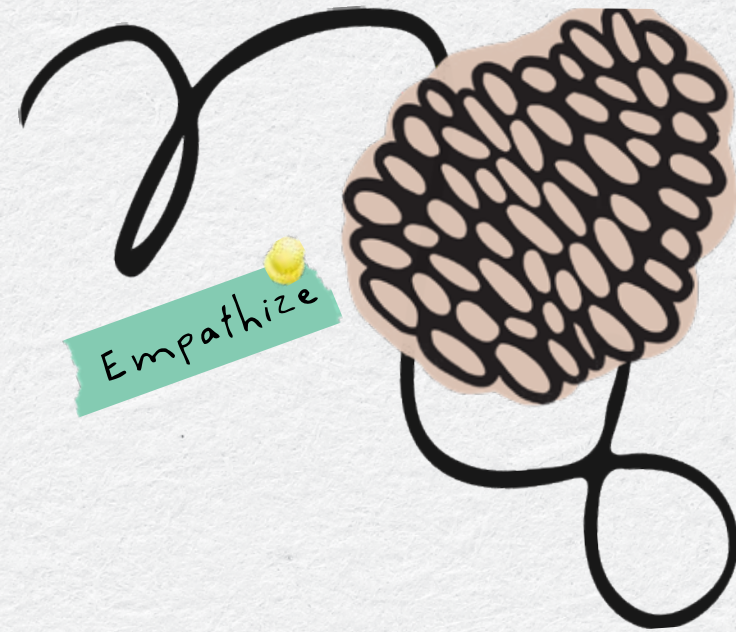
- children of young parents
- community members
- local and state institutions
- young parents

Empathize

We learned more about our end users.



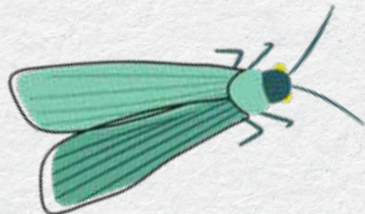
By talking with people, we learned more about our **end users' needs**.



9 young parents

2 healthcare professionals

2 focus groups with 3 young parents



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

Young parents feel isolated, alienated, and sometimes punished because of others' judgement, but they value community and connection to challenge negative feelings and experiences.

Young parents can have traumatizing experiences in their everyday lives because of others' negative judgment, but it has not been categorized/quantified, so our society can learn from it and improve experiences for young parents.

Some young parents felt supported and validated by providers, teachers, programs, or parents throughout their pregnancy experiences, which led to positive and healthy birthing experiences.



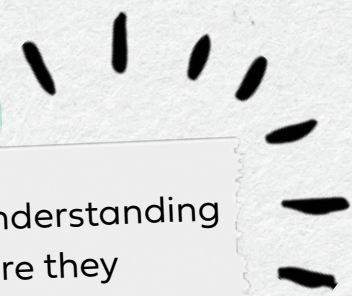
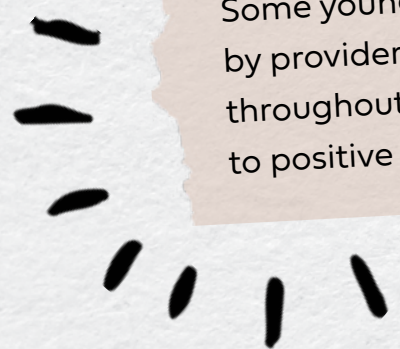
Define



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

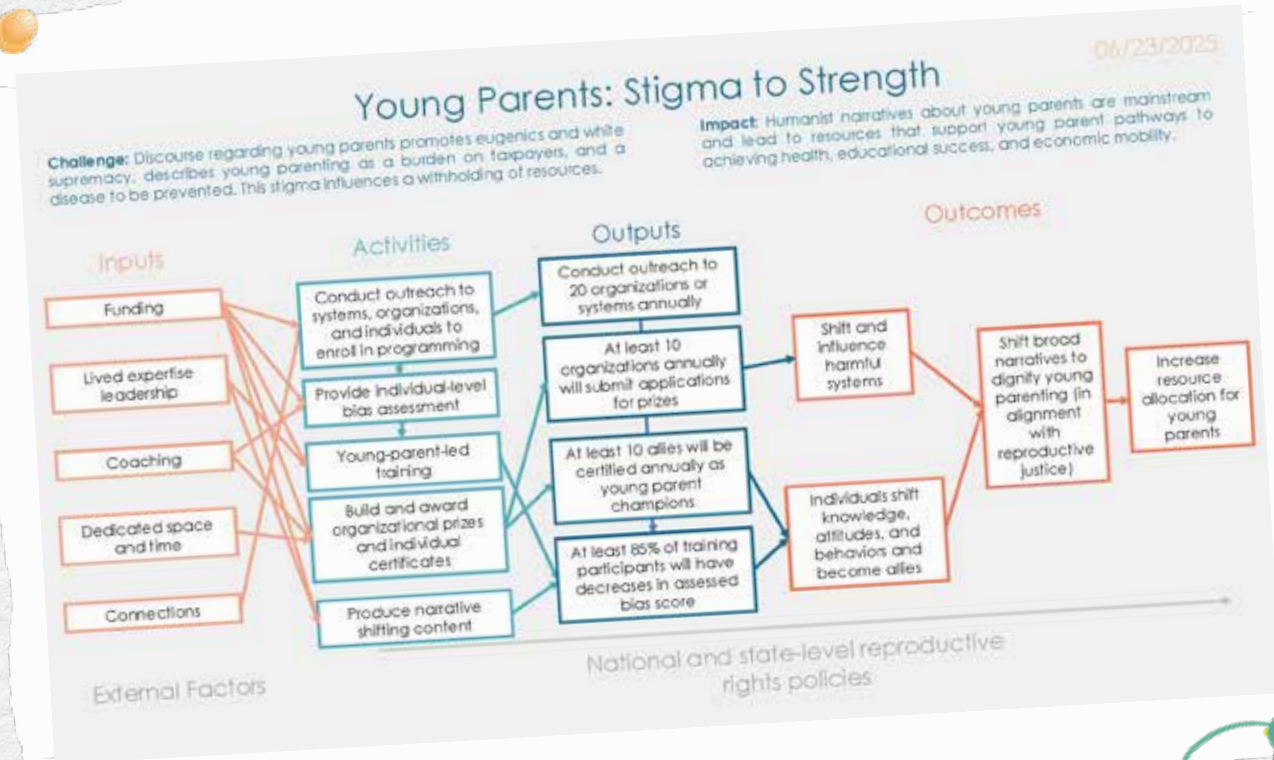


How might we we shift understanding of young parents to ensure they receive resources and investment?



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

Define



We generated many ideas.

Implicit bias assessment that aiming to determine if users have implicit bias towards young parents or older parents

Certificate, award, and/or recognition for individuals who are deemed as supportive and inclusive to young parents

Survey of personal bias, determining main factors supporting or causing bias against young parents

Ideate



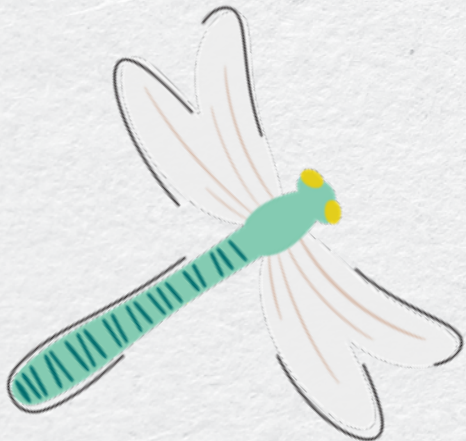
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Ideas

We selected ideas to test.

implicit bias assessment

survey of personal bias



We brought our ideas to life.

prototypes created

3

Which do you think are more likely to be moms?



Order the pictures below on this continuum from who you think is more or less likely to be a mom.

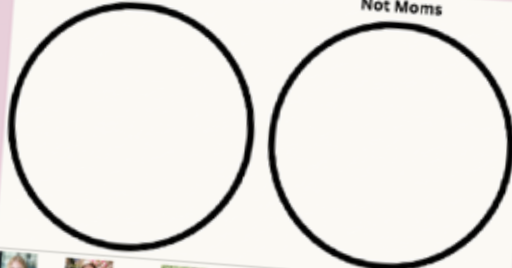


Less likely to be a mom

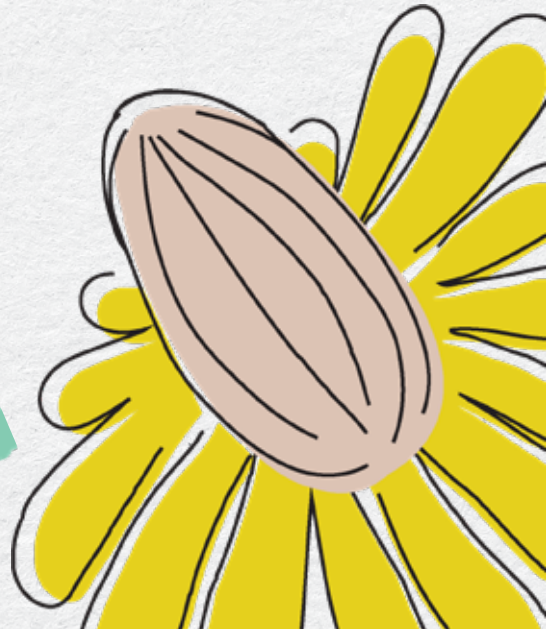
More likely to be a mom

Moms

Not Moms

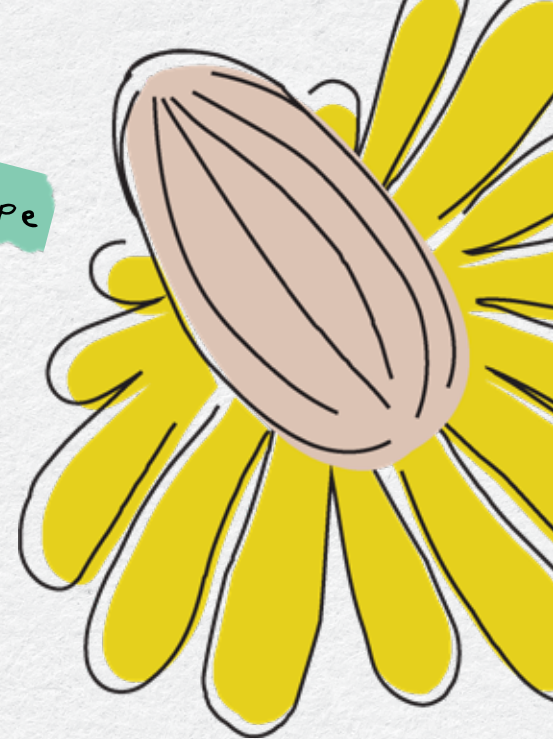
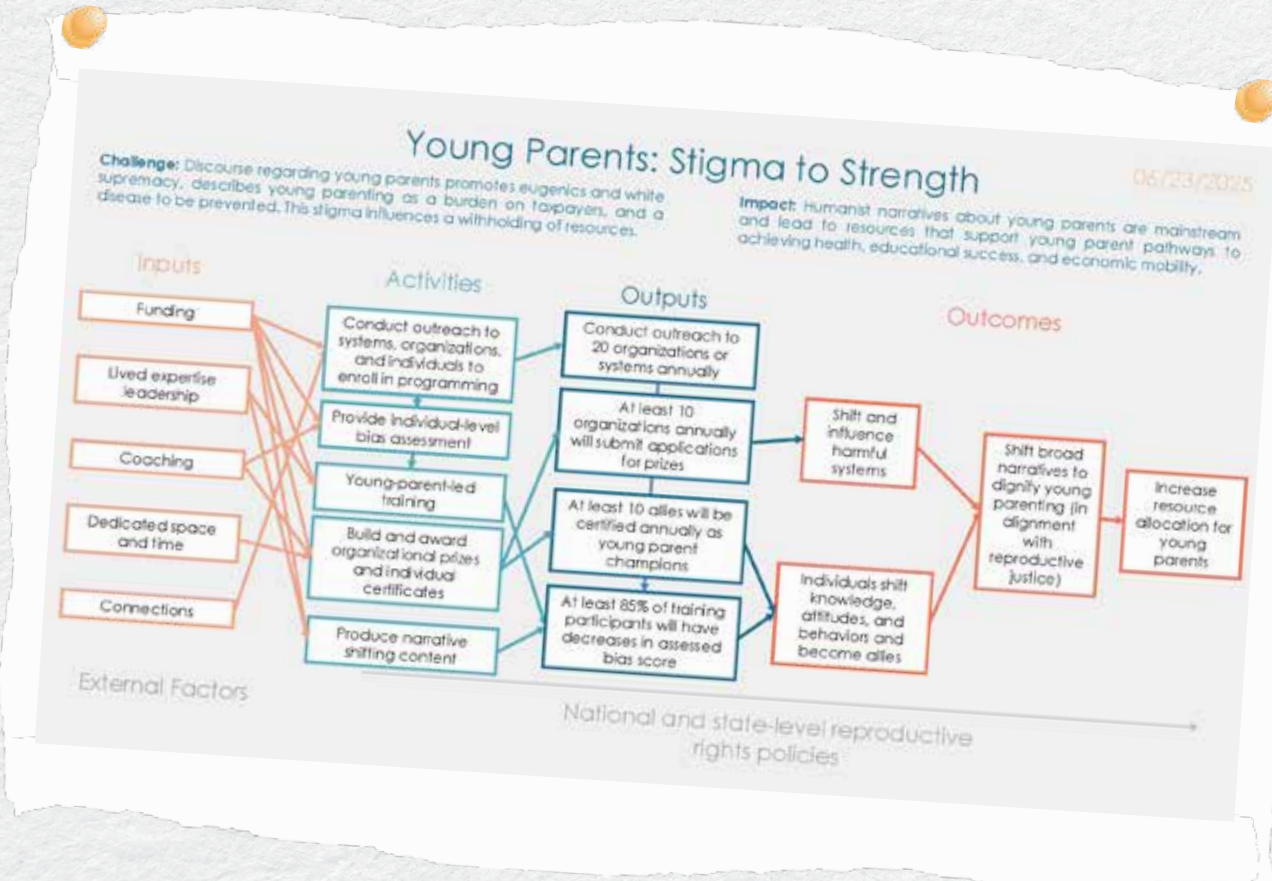


Prototype



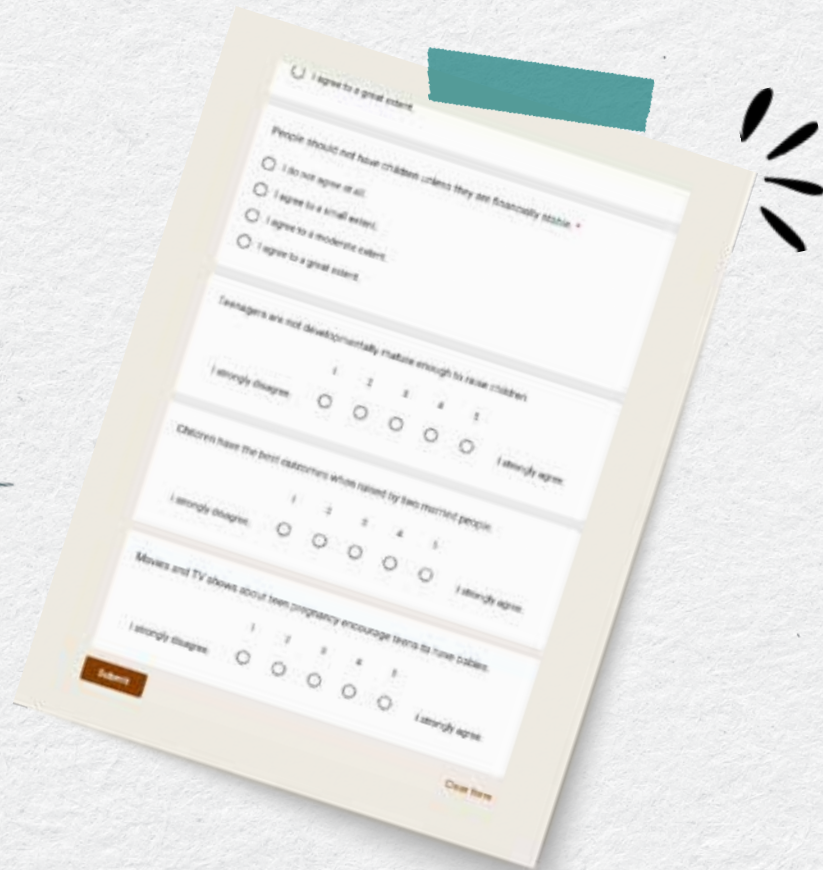
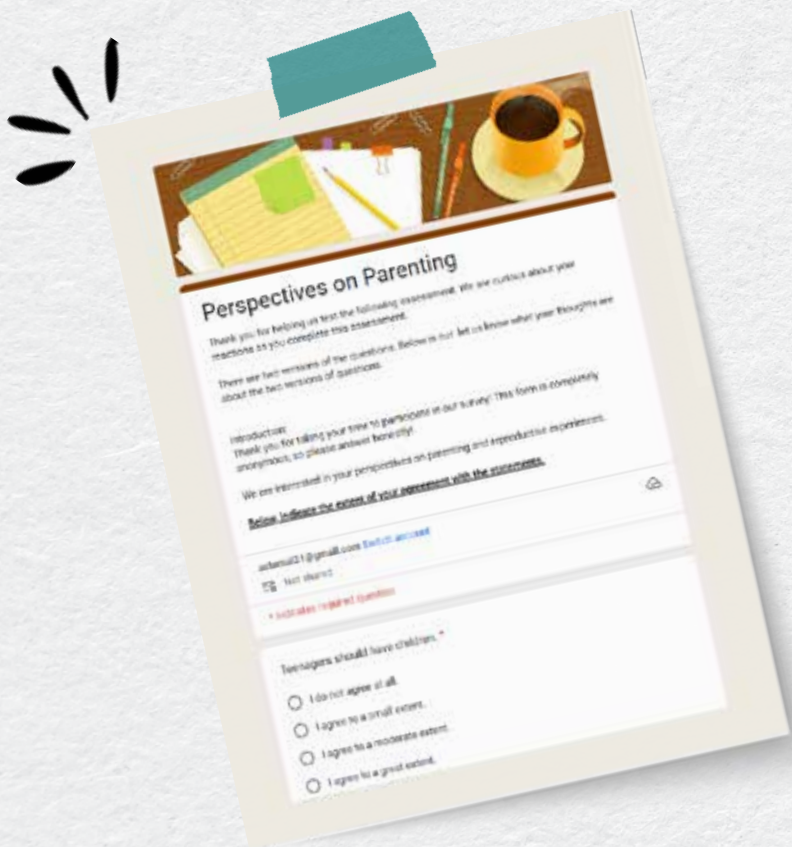
Based on our journey so far,
we revised our logic model.

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.

Doing the assessment with participants made them feel self-conscious. The assessment should happen without supervision.

Allowing participants too much time on the assessment allowed them to overthink and worry about answers. Questions should be timed so participants can move quickly.

The length of the assessment is important. It needs to not overwhelm participants.

Test & Iterate



We defined success for our innovation journey as...

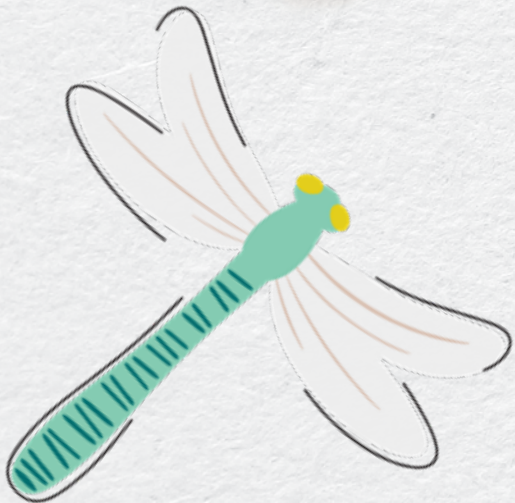



Continual progress on the goal of an assessment

Young parents continuing to be in the conversation

End product on the website with an informational training

People change hearts and minds about young parents



We're excited for our next steps!




Figure out what platform would work best for a survey of personal bias


Determine what information to include after results are given to users

Determine more next steps after we test our first prototypes





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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.