

# A Youth-driven Systems Alignment Intervention to Advance Health Equity among Youth Experiencing Homelessness

Research-in-Progress Webinar Series  
November 20th, 2024  
12-1pm ET



colorado school of  
**public health**



1. Welcome—Systems for Action
2. Background: Who we are and what we do
3. Youth-driven Systems Alignment Strategies
  - Youth Health Connect
  - Youth-centered Data Systems Alignment
4. Research Plan
5. Initial Phases & Next Steps
6. Q&A

# Who We Are: Youth Health and Housing Lab



*In collaboration with youth experiencing homelessness and multi sector partners, the **Youth Health and Housing Lab** works on an array of projects that center a strengths-based, anti-oppressive, trauma-informed approach rooted in Positive Youth Development.*

*We **uplift youth voice, center equity and practice cultural humility** in every aspect of our work as we know that youth are the experts in their own lived experiences, and thus a vital part of any solution constructed to provide them with resources and guidance aimed to improve their health and well being.*



*Scan for our website!*



# Youth Health and Housing Lab Multisector & YPAR Team

## Youth-Serving Agencies



## Healthcare Organizations



## Governmental Agencies



## Education



MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Minneapolis School-Based Clinics

## Research



PEDIATRICS

Youth





## Youth Participatory Action Research

# Background: Youth Homelessness

**4.2 million**

Youth experience homelessness  
annually in the U.S.

(similar across rural and urban)

Running Away

Being Thrown Out

Rough Sleeping

Staying in Shelter

Couch Surfing



Youth Leaders are  
Co-Presenters and Co-Trainers



Action Board of Youth  
Collaborators

# Youth Participatory Action Research: Strategies for Engaging and Supporting Youth



Multi-sector Consortium Participation



Focus Groups



Surveys

A top-down view of a group of people's hands stacked in a circle, symbolizing unity and collaboration. The hands are of various skin tones and are wearing blue wristbands with the text 'EMFAS' on them. The background is dark, and the overall atmosphere is one of solidarity and teamwork.

What does it look like  
from your perspectives for youth  
and others with lived experiences  
to meaningfully engage in research  
and why is it important?



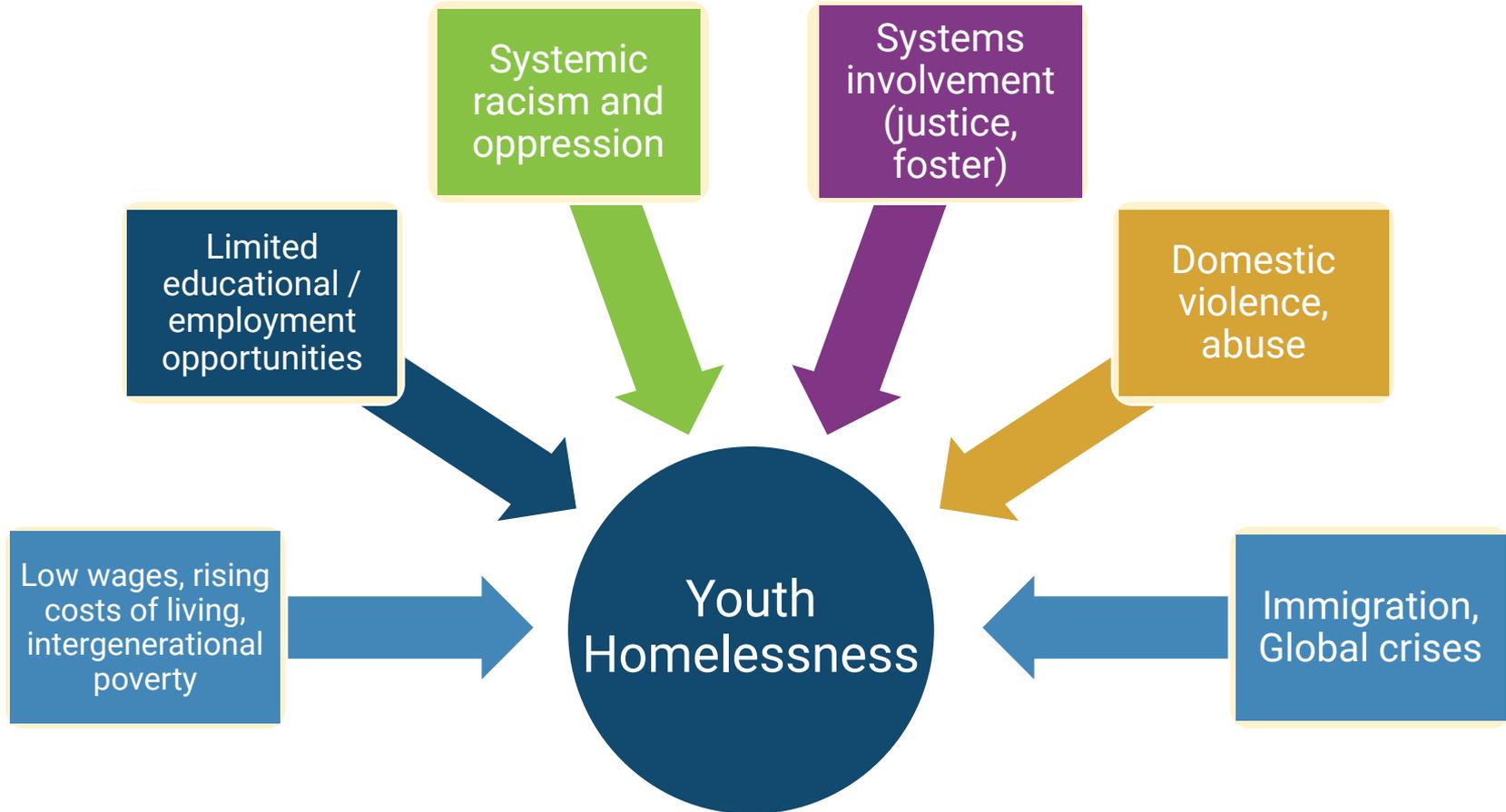
Photo by [Nicolas Lobos](#) on [Unsplash](#)



Photo by [Janosch Lino](#) on [Unsplash](#)



Photo by [Gabriel Brito](#) on [Unsplash](#)



Youth experiencing homelessness hold diverse identities.



**73%** identify as

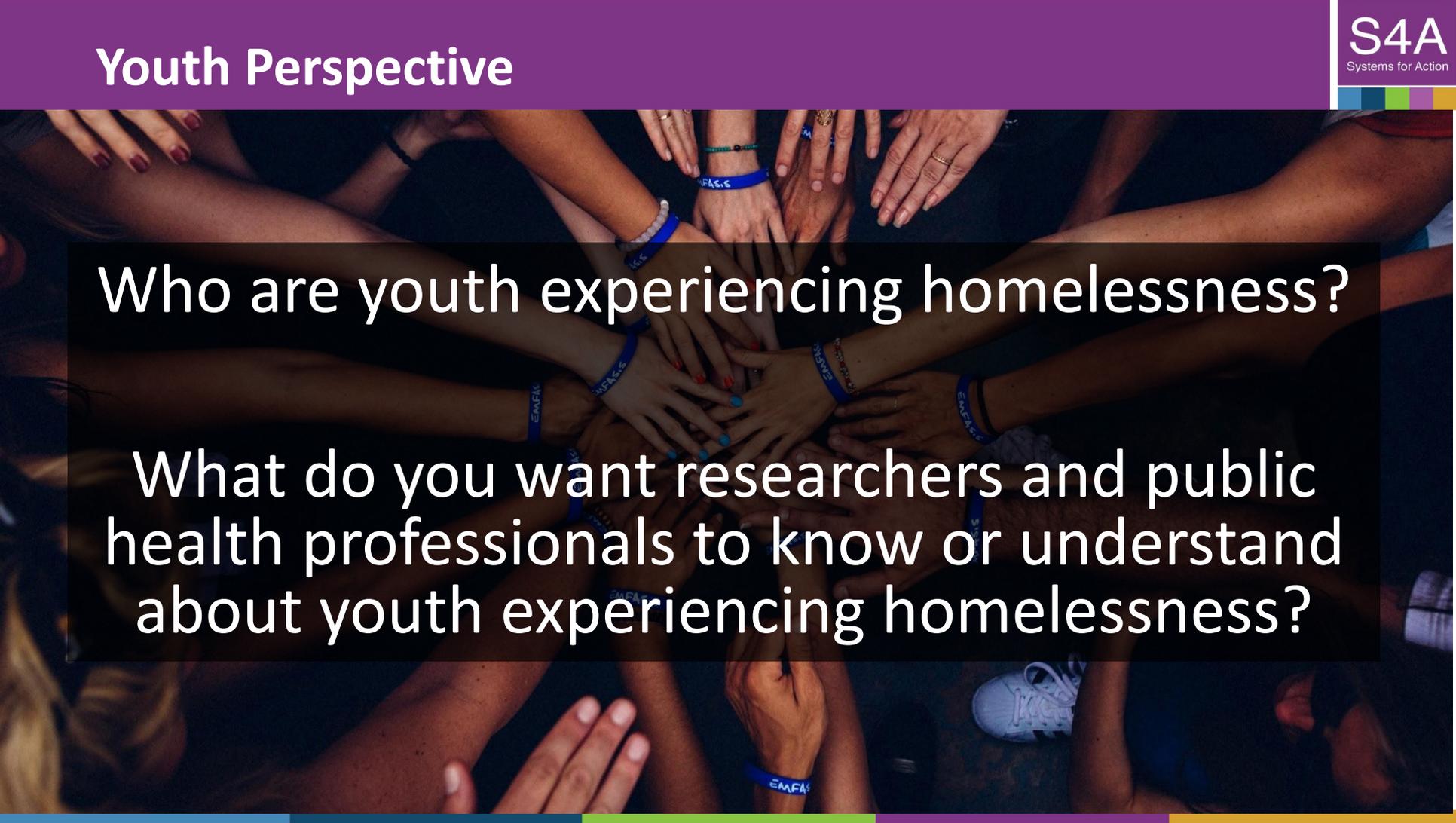
BIPOC



**23%** identify as LGBTQ+

A top-down photograph of a diverse group of young people, likely students, gathered in a circle. They are all reaching their hands towards the center, stacking them on top of each other in a gesture of unity and support. Many of the individuals are wearing blue wristbands with the word "EMFAS" printed on them in white. The scene is lit with dramatic, low-key lighting, creating strong highlights on the hands and wristbands against a dark background. The overall mood is one of solidarity and resilience.

**Youth are remarkably resilient in the face of trauma and oppressive systems.**



Who are youth experiencing homelessness?

What do you want researchers and public health professionals to know or understand about youth experiencing homelessness?



***“Health begins  
where we live, learn,  
work and play.”***

# Health Risks Associated with Homelessness

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Photo by [Hajran Pambudi](#) on [Unsplash](#)

**Health Risks Associated with  
Homelessness  
Exploitation  
Incarceration  
Foster care  
Marginalization & Trauma**

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Violence, injury, abuse

Sexual health risk: STIs, pregnancy

Chronic untreated medical conditions

Mental health risk, suicide

Substance use

Barriers to care

Unmet basic needs (food, housing)



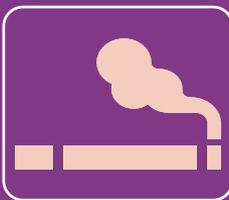
# Health needs among Youth Experiencing Homelessness (MN data)



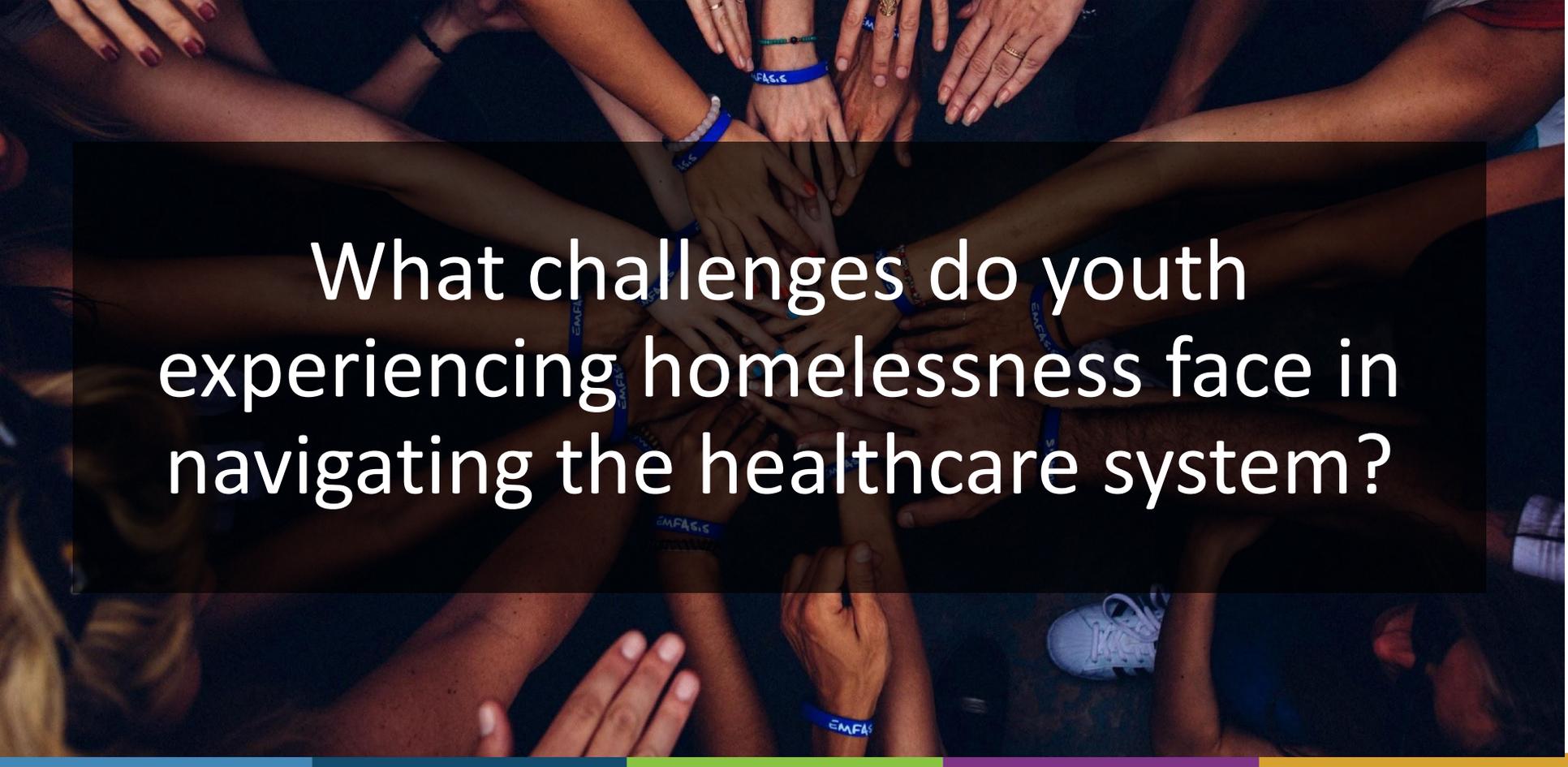
60% serious mental illness



33% physical health conditions

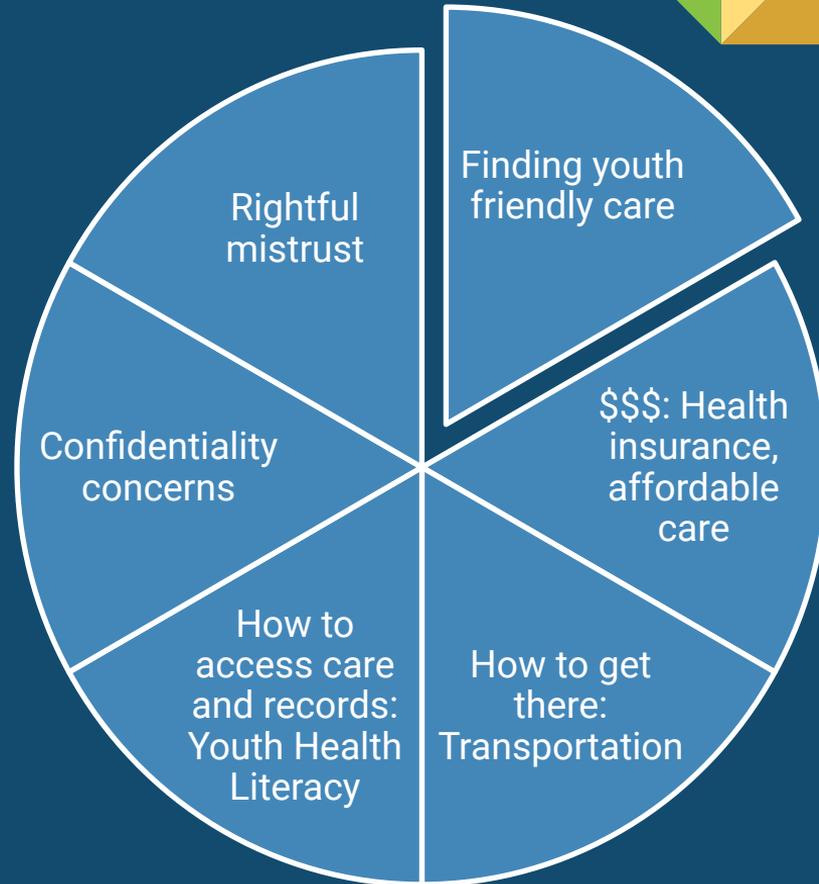


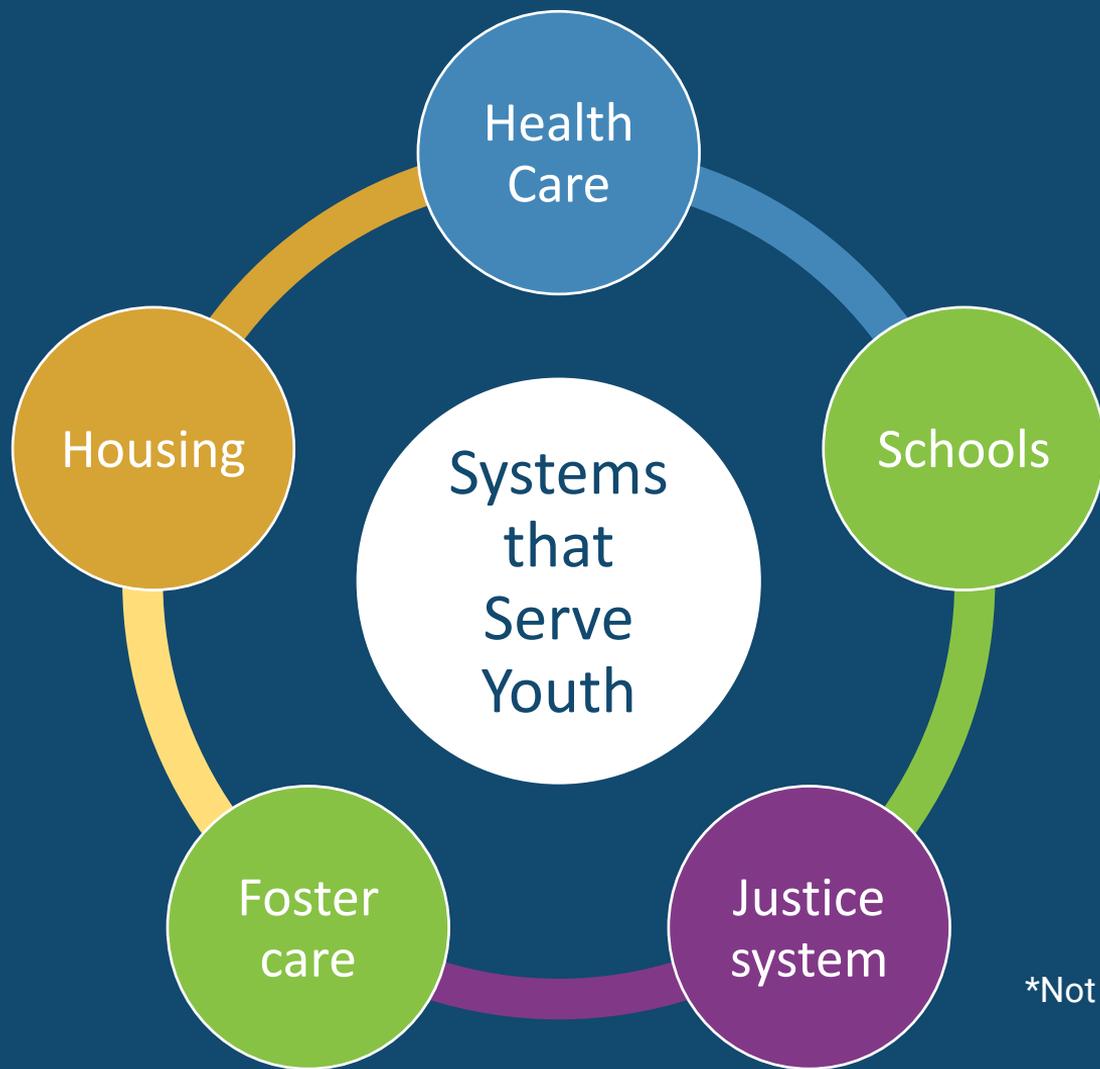
16% substance use disorder



What challenges do youth experiencing homelessness face in navigating the healthcare system?

# Barriers Youth Face Navigating the Healthcare System





\*Not a comprehensive list

**Youth-driven,  
multi-sector  
approaches can  
address the complex  
drivers of  
homelessness.**



Photo by [Jim Witkowski](#) on [Unsplash](#)

# Roadmap



1. Welcome—Systems for Action
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This youth participatory action research will address structural inequities

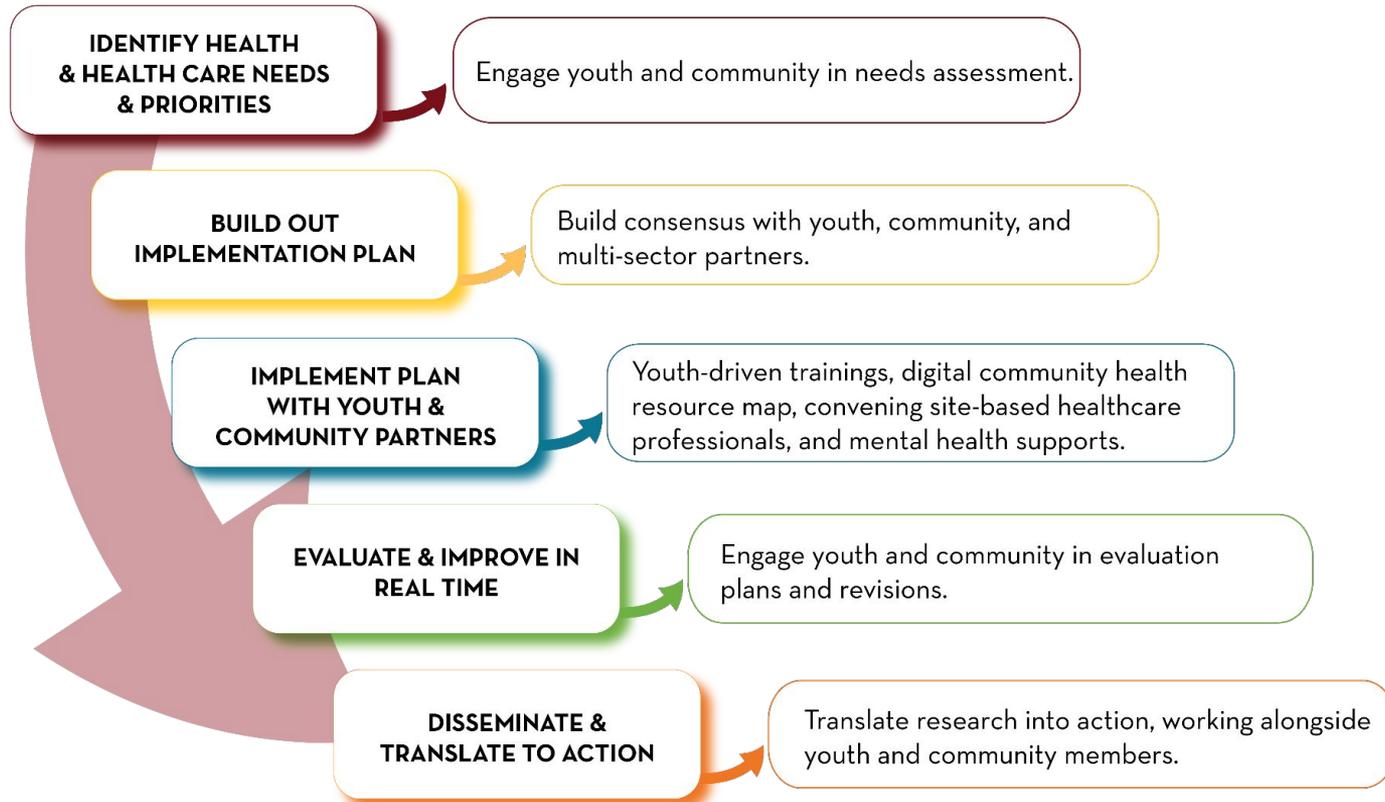
by:

1. *Implementing youth-driven strategies for systems alignment*

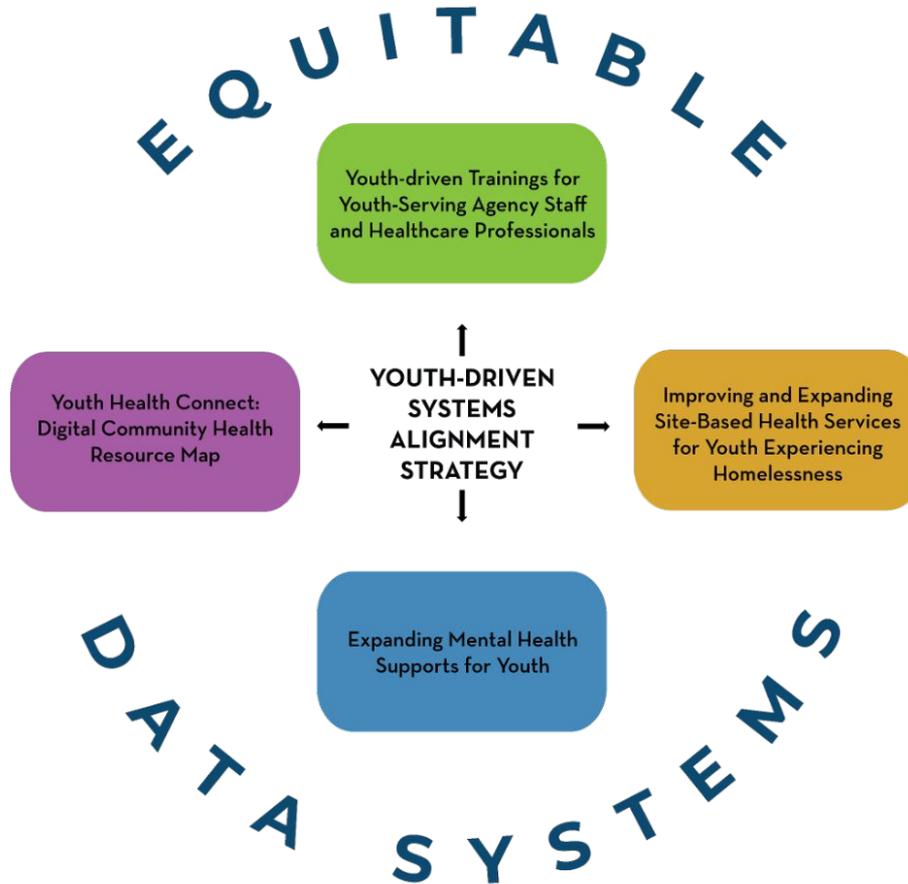
AND

2. *Uplifting the voices of youth experiencing homelessness, specifically BIPOC youth, within and across systems from which they have been historically excluded.*

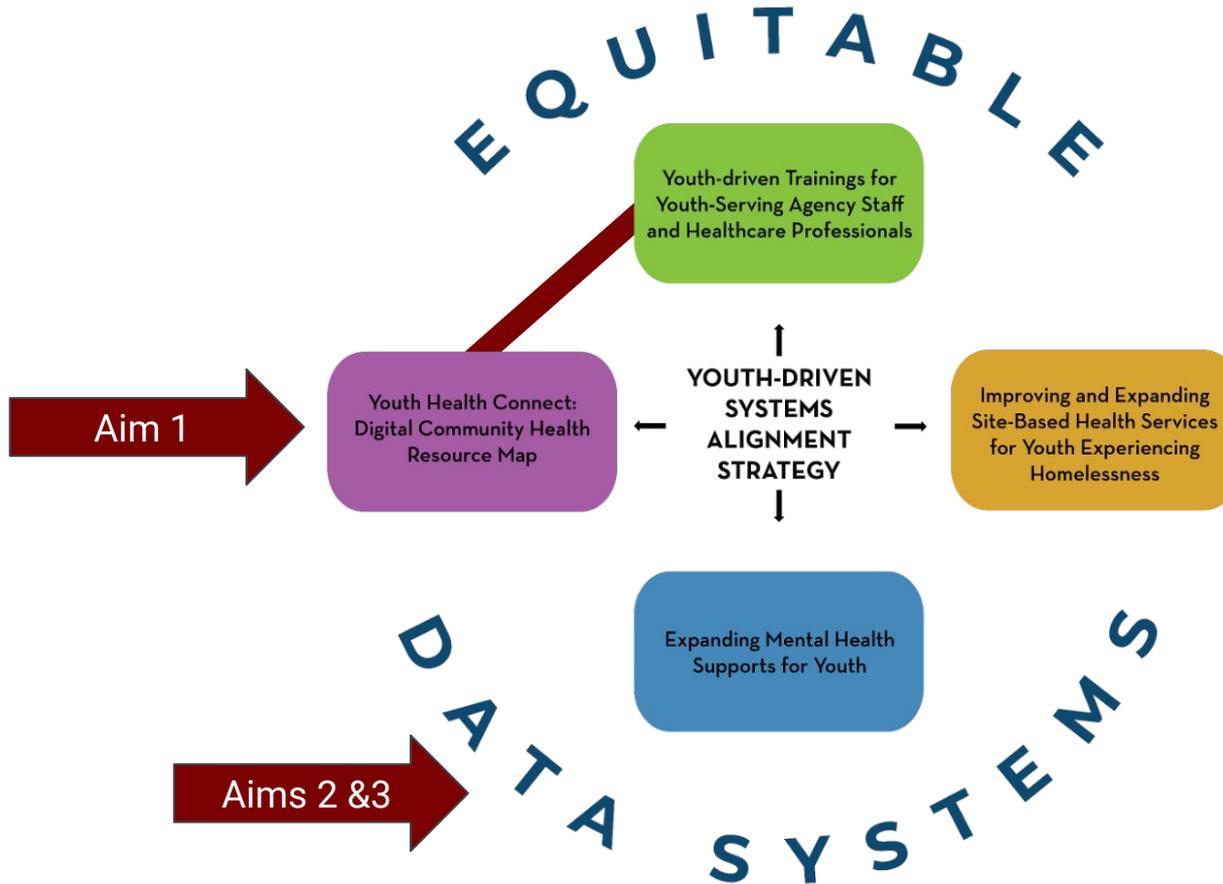
# S4A Development Project: Laying the Foundation



# Multi-sector, Youth-driven Systems Alignment Strategies



# Multi-sector, Youth-driven Systems Alignment Strategies



# YouthHealthConnect: Digital Health Resource Map & Training



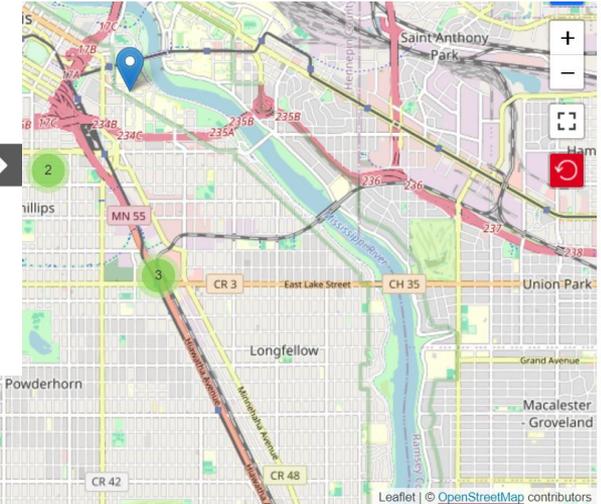
## Youth Health Connect

[Home](#) [About](#) [Explore Map](#) [My Healthcare Rights](#) [Contact Us](#)



## Welcome to Youth Health Connect!

A tool designed to bridge the gap between youth experiencing homeless and public health services in the Twin Cities metro area.



[Back to top](#) 

## Explore resources with ease by selecting from filters

Simply choose a category to refine your search and view resources as a comprehensive list tailored to your needs.



How do you think  
YouthHealthConnect could help youth  
experiencing homelessness?

## DATA SYSTEMS ALIGNMENT RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT SUMMARY

**FOSTER RAMSEY/HENNEPIN  
COUNTY PARTNERSHIP**

**CLARIFY MINOR CONSENT LAW AND  
PRIVACY RIGHTS OF YOUTH**

**LEVERAGE EXISTING DATA SETS**

**CENTER YOUTH VOICE IN DATA SYSTEMS**

**TRANSPARENT, TRAUMA-INFORMED  
HEALTH INTAKE AND HEALTHCARE  
PROCESSES**

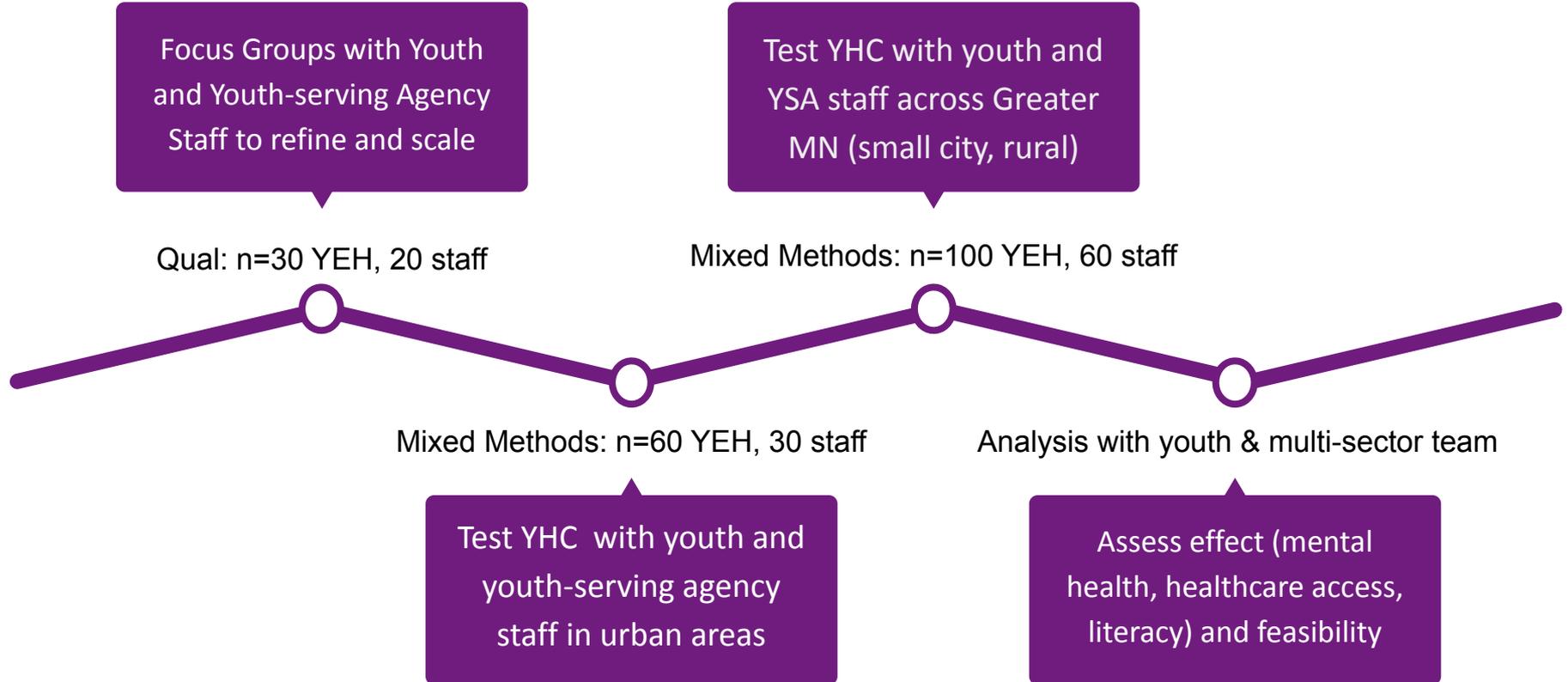
**ENSURE CLEAR INFORMATION  
SHARING LIMITS**

# Roadmap



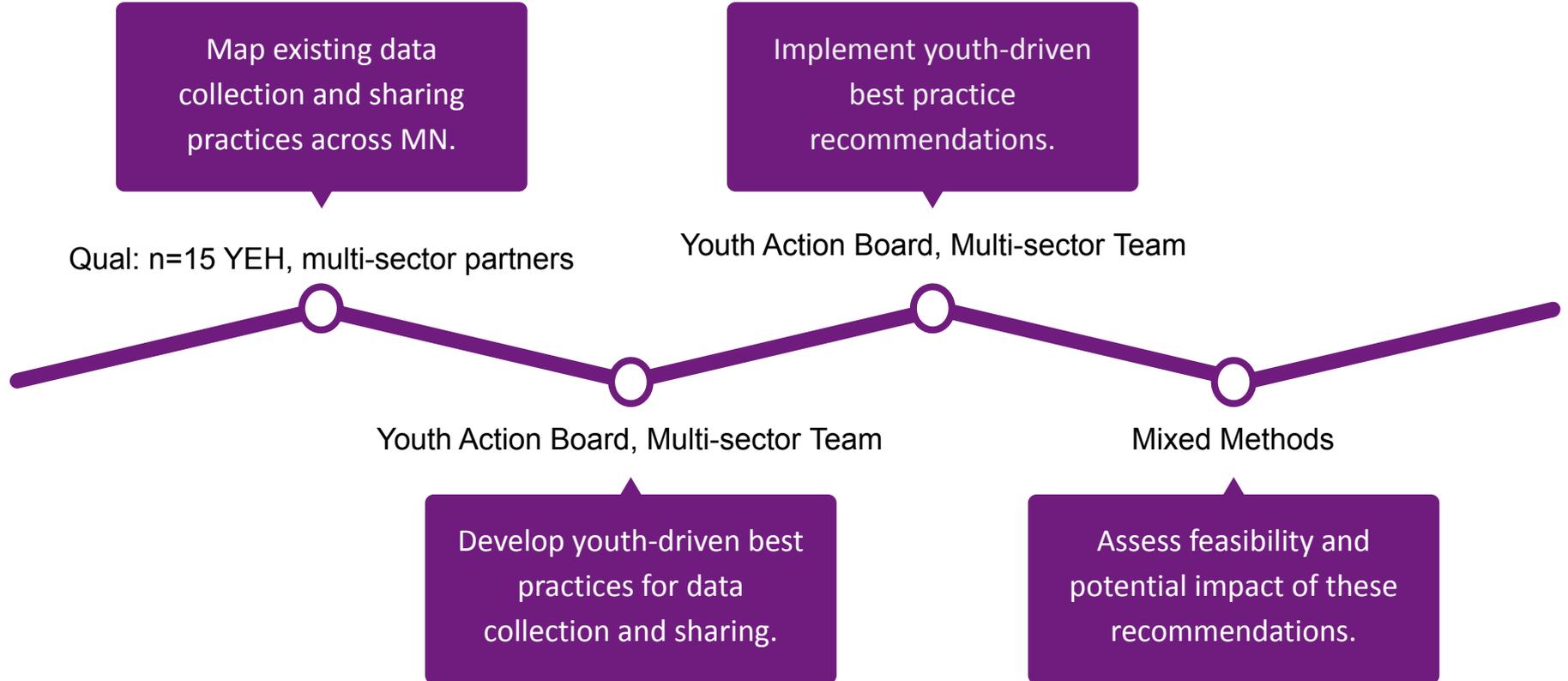
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# Research Aim 1: YouthHealthConnect Feasibility and Effectiveness



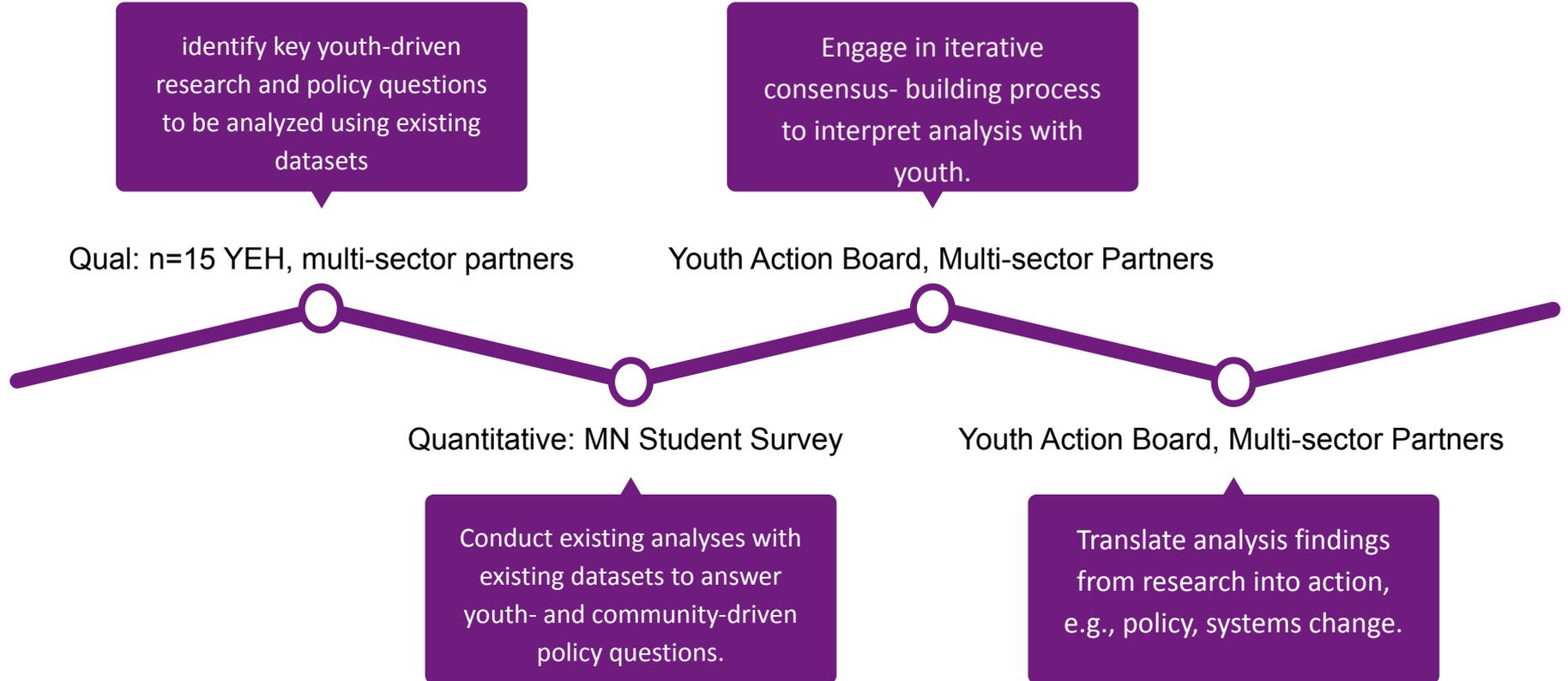
# Research Aim 2:

## Youth-driven, trauma-informed data collection & sharing practices



# Research Aim 3:

## Leveraging large datasets to inform policy and practice



# Roadmap

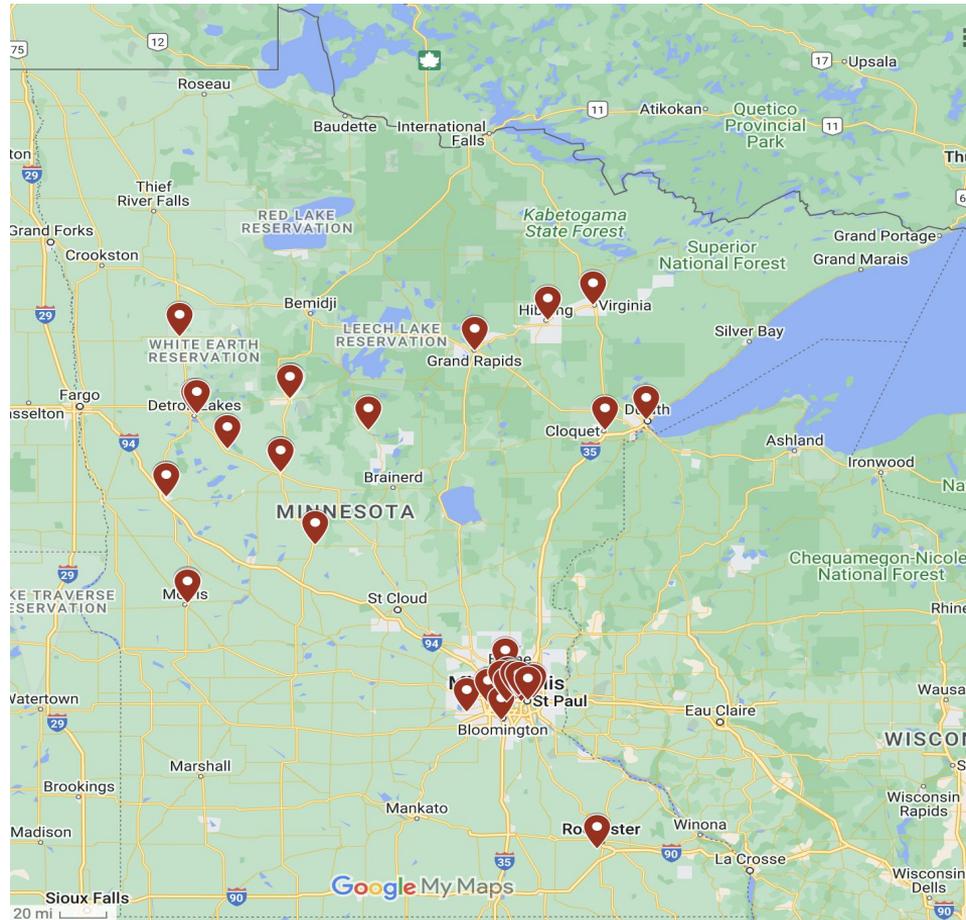
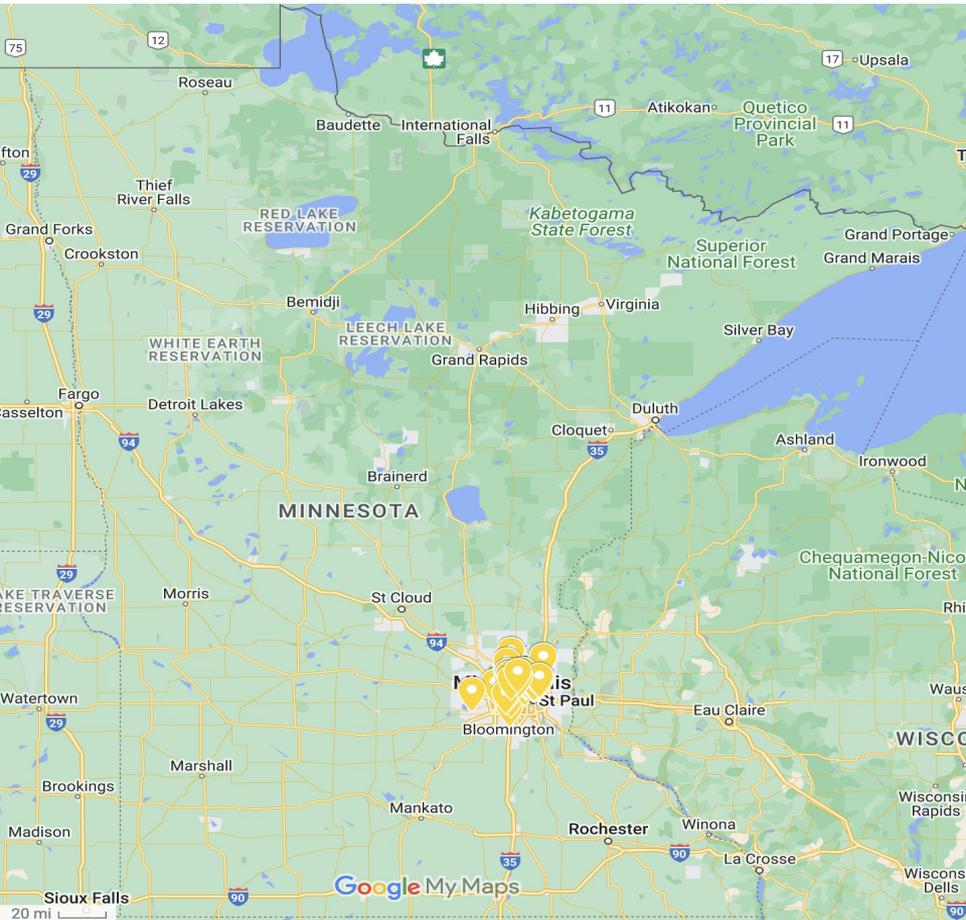


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# Initial Phase: Youth Engagement

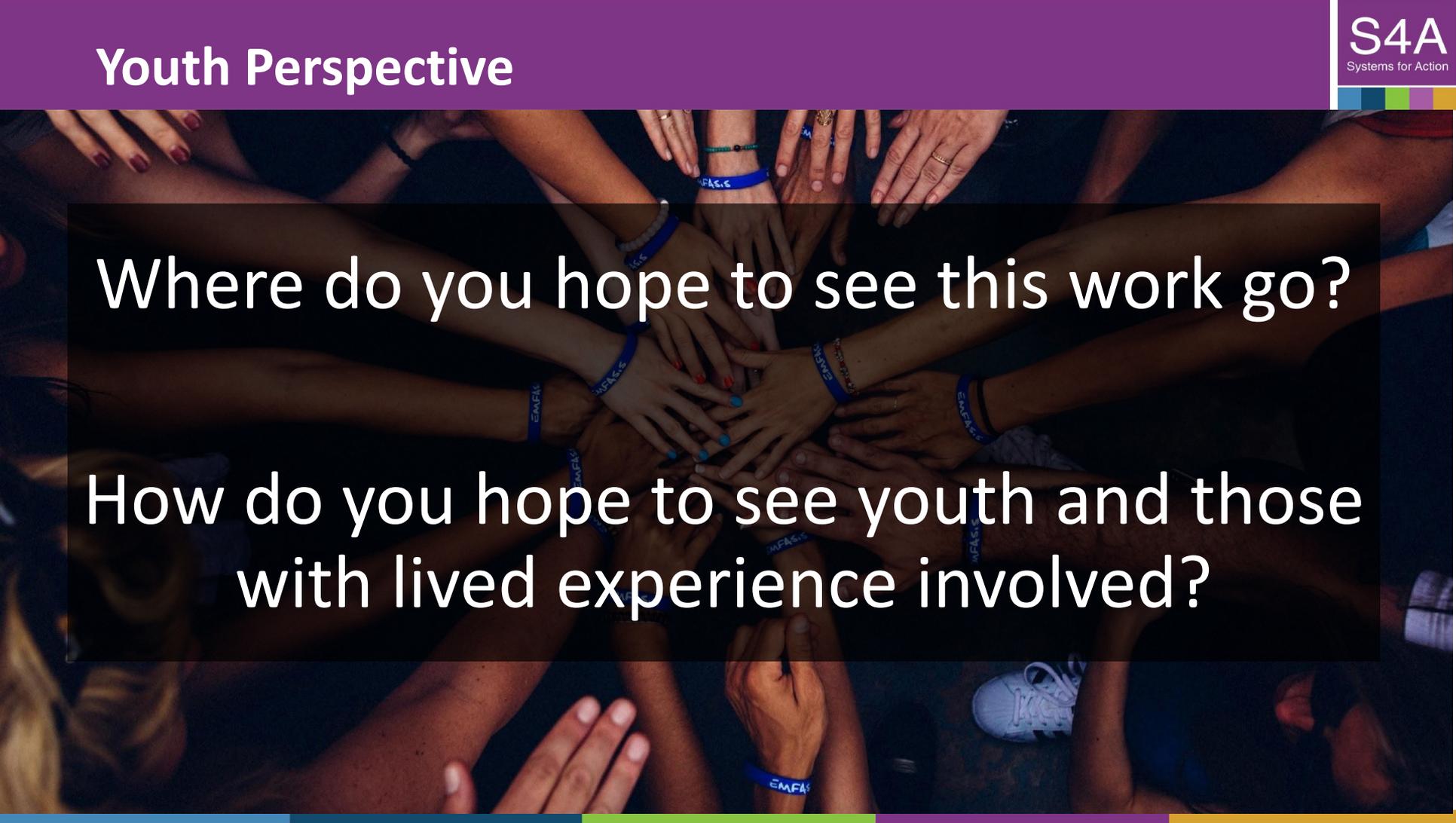


# Initial Phase: Scaling and Growing our Partnerships



# Next Steps





Where do you hope to see this work go?

How do you hope to see youth and those with lived experience involved?

**S4A**  
Systems for Action

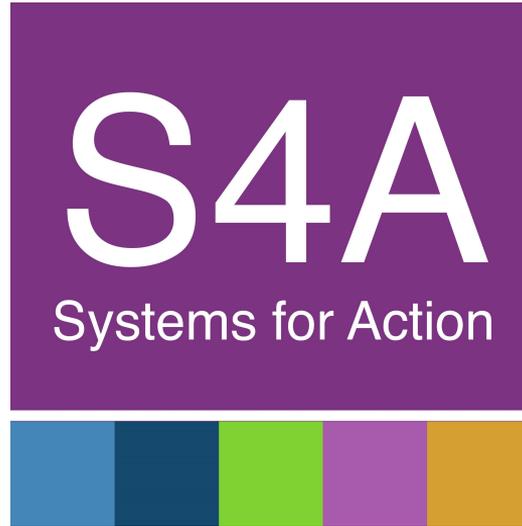
Thank You! Questions?



UMN Youth Health and Housing  
Lab,  
Including our awesome Youth  
Collaborators!



# Questions?



[www.systemsforaction.org](http://www.systemsforaction.org)

 [@Systems4Action](https://twitter.com/Systems4Action)

If you would like to receive a **certificate of completion** for today's ResProg webinar, please complete the survey at the end of the session.

One will be emailed to you.

***Systems for Action*** is a National Program Office of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and a collaborative effort of the Colorado School of Public Health, administered by the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, Aurora, CO.



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