Participatory Action Research (PAR) is a process in which researchers and transition age youth (TAY) collaborate on a research project designed to improve mental health services. Collaboration requires that TAY have the opportunity to be actively involved in all phases of the research from defining the problem to disseminating results.

Why?
- Enhances relevance of research questions and methods
- Generates actionable results
- Widens dissemination of research findings
- Distrust between:
  - Consumers and non-consumers
  - Experienced researchers and new researchers
  - Adults and young adults

Challenges Faced
- Different from traditional research training and methods
- Funding or infrastructure needed for team building
- Young adults may lack employment experience
- Young adults may have turbulent lives
- Research leadership’s commitment to active participation of young adults
- Promoting young adult self-efficacy and empowerment
- Adults and young adults working together
- Training on research for TAY
- Naturally occurring adult mentoring of young adults
- Availability of developmentally appropriate vocational supports

How?
- Vocational/skill development
- Self-efficacy that instills empowerment to act
- Self-confidence and a sense of hope
- Improved health outcomes
- Life-long civic participants

Positive Outcomes for Young Adults

Visit us at http://labs.umassmed.edu/transitionsRTC

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