Sixto Cancel
Founder & CEO
Think of us

National Press Foundation
The Future of the American Child 2023 Fellowship
May 7, 2023
Provide workers, youth and supportive adults the first ever data driven life coaching platform for youth ageing out of foster care
Think of Us is focused on shifting the six elements that keep systematic outcomes in place...

Every system outcome is dependent upon a combination of these six conditions of systematic elements.
An National Opportunity

Think of Us raises audacious investment to accelerate transformation of child welfare system
TOU will work in partnership to **transform** the child welfare system:

- **create a new part of the system that supports families and youth (PREVENTION)**
- **structure a new version of kinship care (Kinship)**
- **modernize how we support older adolescents (Older Youth)**
The Opportunity

(PREVENTION)
reduce entry for poverty by 50%

(Kinship Care)
80% of those in care live with someone they know and trust

(Older Youth)
20K young people who exit the system annually have the support to thrive
TOU Systems Design Method to meet the moment

**Diagnose**

TOU and partner organizations conduct assessment of existing work to identify needs and evaluate which module is the most appropriate entry point for a proposed intervention/partnership opportunity.

**Research & Understand**

- **IDENTIFY**: Surface pain points and opportunities for transformation in the system
- **REFRAME**: Develop a differentiated and nuanced understanding of the pain point or opportunity

**Design & Implement**

- **SCOUT**: Leverage existing solutions (applying innovation and technology) OR co-create new ones
- **IDEATE**: Determine the tools needed to address the pain point or opportunity considering the needs of impacted individuals

**Codify**

- **REPLICATE**: When applicable, scale solutions at the county, state, and/or federal level to drive sustainable impact
- **UPGRADE**: When applicable, infuse solutions into the system's DNA through codified policy and shifts in mental models

**CENTER LIVED EXPERIENCE & STAY PROXIMATE**

*dotted line indicates that not all partnerships result in Codify – some solutions can be deployed as localized, targeted interventions that don’t require scale or recoding public policy.*
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REFRAME
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KEY
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STAY PROXIMATE VIA DIRECT SERVICE & REFORM IMPLEMENTATION

Productively inaccurate
lived experience = data
Where do they live?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guid</th>
<th>ClientId</th>
<th>MoneyFor</th>
<th>MoneyFor</th>
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<th>OtherFee</th>
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<td>Basic every day</td>
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<td>Having to mo</td>
<td>I need immed</td>
<td>75 years</td>
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<td>am currently</td>
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<td>child who cas is from AZ and the pay</td>
<td>I am currently</td>
<td>I am Currently</td>
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This youth established a clear ranking (from first to fourth) of the different sub-groups of people in their life (in order: romantic partner, friends, co-workers, foster family).
The most prominent relationship this youth highlighted is the one with their ILP case manager.
“All I ever wanted was for a family but I was told I was too old so I was kept in a group home until I aged out. I wasn’t given the necessary things or resources to survive once I got out and I got kicked out of my program for not being productive because I lost the will to live because I didn’t know what to do with my life now that it was my own.”

(MP-LT-AZ-01)
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Productively inaccurate
In December 2020, Congress released more than $400M in emergency funds for current and former foster youth in response to the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. States were tasked with eligibility verification and distribution to young people.
Check For Us is a national outreach campaign run by current and former foster youth with pandemic relief funds to make the process of accessing TEFYI with pandemic relief funds as simple as possible.

Congress made $400 million available, your state is making plans on how to use it right now and we’re here to help.

Do you need support?
Do you know your state’s plan?
Are you signed up to receive funds?

If so, Check For Us is here to make sure that you get the resources you need.

Check for Us Initiative: Key Takeaways
“We did something that was supposedly impossible.”
- Sixto Cancel, TOU

44 states and D.C. had data transferred to them effectively
24 states used the ‘Check for Us’ application as part of their official verification process
30k+ alumni found and connected via the ‘Check for Us’ campaign*
87.5% of applicants applied from a mobile phone
95.5% application completion rate for those who specified their state

*35% of eligible population in CA where we had official state contract
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The media power
The power of the media

The framing of the problem... there are 400,000 youth in the system and this system affects a small number of children...

Foster care is result of multiple systems failing.

33% of families with children will experience an investigation before that child’s 18th birthday / 53% of all black families will experience this

10% of all black children in the United States experience foster care

Media plays a significant role in what governors and commissioners hold their staff too.

When the media reports on a child dying, children sleeping in offices that is where reform efforts are pushed.

Commissioners have been outing due to negative press even if they have been doing a really good job.

Fueling the support for the right interventions that go beyond moments.

System change coverage provides cover for leaders to take calculated risk

Empower legislators to lean in more
CASE PLANNING GOAL

Permanency Plan Goal: Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement

Target Date: 12/31/2012

Progress/Barriers: [Redacted]

Concurrent Goal: N/A

Progress/Barriers: Indep. Living is the goal for this youth.

Conditions of the Child That Influence the Permanency Goal:

Sixto adamantly refused to be reunified with Mrs. Santiago. Sixto is working on living independently.

Compelling Reason for Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement:

Sixto refused reunification and adoption. No viable resources for transfer of guardianship.

PLACEMENT

Date of most recent removal from home: 3/28/2008
Trauma makes the headlines

A Black family fights to get their kids back from Tennessee Department of Children's Services

One month after the Tennessee Highway Patrol pulled the couple over, their five young children remain in state custody

Texas newborn is headed home after custody fight involving race, midwifery and the child welfare system

Child Protective Services removed Mia Jackson from her home and placed her in foster care for 25 days after her parents chose their midwife's care over a hospital.
Call to Action

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