

THE CREATION PROCESS

Mia Cai, Timothy Choi, Zeba Khoja, Roham Sanaie, Isobel Sharpe, Afraah Shirin

WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DID

WHO WE ARE:

We are a group of six undergraduate students with a diverse educational background. The challenge we were tasked with was to **envision the future of autism in the year 2030**. More specifically, we explored the **transition period** from pediatric to adult care. Our process was as follows:

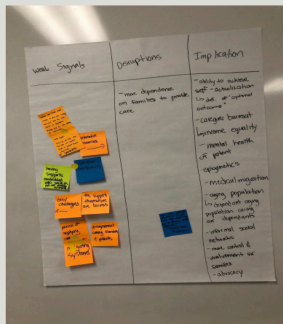
- (1) Interview stakeholders in the issue
- (2) Generate weak signals & insights surrounding their responses
- (3) Ask questions about the future of care
- (4) Create a museum exhibit to show what we learned
- (5) Reflect on our experience

1 WHO WE SPOKE TO:

- University student with autism
- Social worker who assists with the transition period
- Mother of young child with autism from rural area
- Former Innovation By Design student
- Mother and sister of young adult with autism
- Adult autism Transition period researcher
- Representative from Autism Ontario adult services
- Mother of young child with autism on the wait list
- Researcher designing an employment program for young adults with autism

GENERATING WEAK SIGNALS & INSIGHTS

Weak signals: Indicators of future trends



- (1) A large amount of research is going into employment programs
- (2) Budget cuts are reducing support for both children and adults

2 INSIGHTS: THE THINGS THAT RESONATED WITH US

Based on our interviews we have picked out some key insights for the future:

- Current services are **not effective or efficient**.
- Income disparity causes problems for **access to services**.
- Solutions are **heavily focused on the entire spectrum**, rather than catering to individualized needs.
- The government is not taking action; **the progress in the field may seem a little bleak**.

3 FUTURE QUESTIONS: CHALLENGING HOW WE THINK ABOUT THE PROBLEM

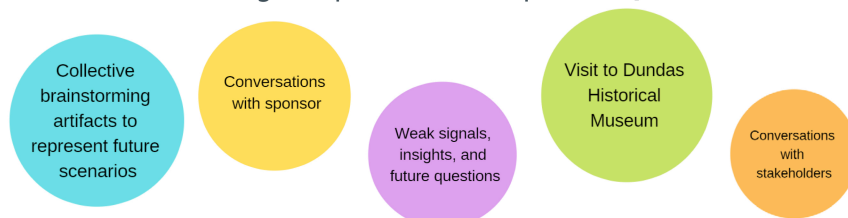
Based on our weak signals and insights, we generated the following future questions:

- What if supporting these individuals can **reduce long term healthcare costs**?
- What if this research, and the policy it informs, is based upon **feedback** from those with autism?
- What if **employment programs** can provide more adults with autism the skills they need to make a contribution to society?

FINISHING UP

4 BUILDING OUR MUSEUM EXHIBIT:

We were motivated to develop a museum exhibit to portray the **reality of the current challenges in autism care**. Although emotions of concern arose when we probed our stakeholders about the future of autism care, there were also feelings of optimism for the possibility of a better future.



5 WHAT WE LEARNED:

- (1) Through speaking to the stakeholders, we gained **unique perspectives**, as well as and learned about the **issue at hand**.
- (2) We learned how to **ask the right questions** by thinking about **different possible future outcomes** for autism care.
- (3) We learned how to **diverge, and then converge** with our ideas to decide on the single idea for our museum exhibit.