

ROAD MAP INITIATIVE

The issues faced by young people with mental health conditions post-release from jail.

Meet Randy.

He is a 31-year-old, black male who has been diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder. Randy was released from jail after a 240-day stay for burglary. While in jail, Randy was flagged for mid-level mental health services. Upon a mental health evaluation when entering the jail, he indicated mild suicidal ideation and was put on daily observation. Randy was released from jail at 7:00pm and is faced with a myriad of road blocks that are hindering his smooth transition back into his community.



Roadblock: Transportation

Randy was arrested in Calumet Heights, where his property, including his wallet and phone, is being held at the police precinct there. He needs his phone to call friends for a place to stay, but the police station is an hour and a half away by public transit.



Rest Stop: Place to Stay

Randy has a cousin who agreed to let him stay in his apartment for a week. Meanwhile he is moving forward trying to find an apartment on his own and trying to get a subsidy.



Speedbump: Medications

When Randy left jail he was given a prescription for psychotropic medications that he has been taking for 5 years to manage his Bipolar Disorder. However, the prescription can only be filled at the county hospital, which operates out of the medical district another hour and a half away by public transit.



Maintenance: Relations

Meanwhile, Randy is working to contact his mother and brother who live in Gary, Indiana. It takes months to rebuild fractured relationships. He used to work at a convenience store, but his employer is not happy about his unexpected absence and his growing record. Tom returns to the store several times trying to persuade his employer to give him his job back.



Detour: Court Dates

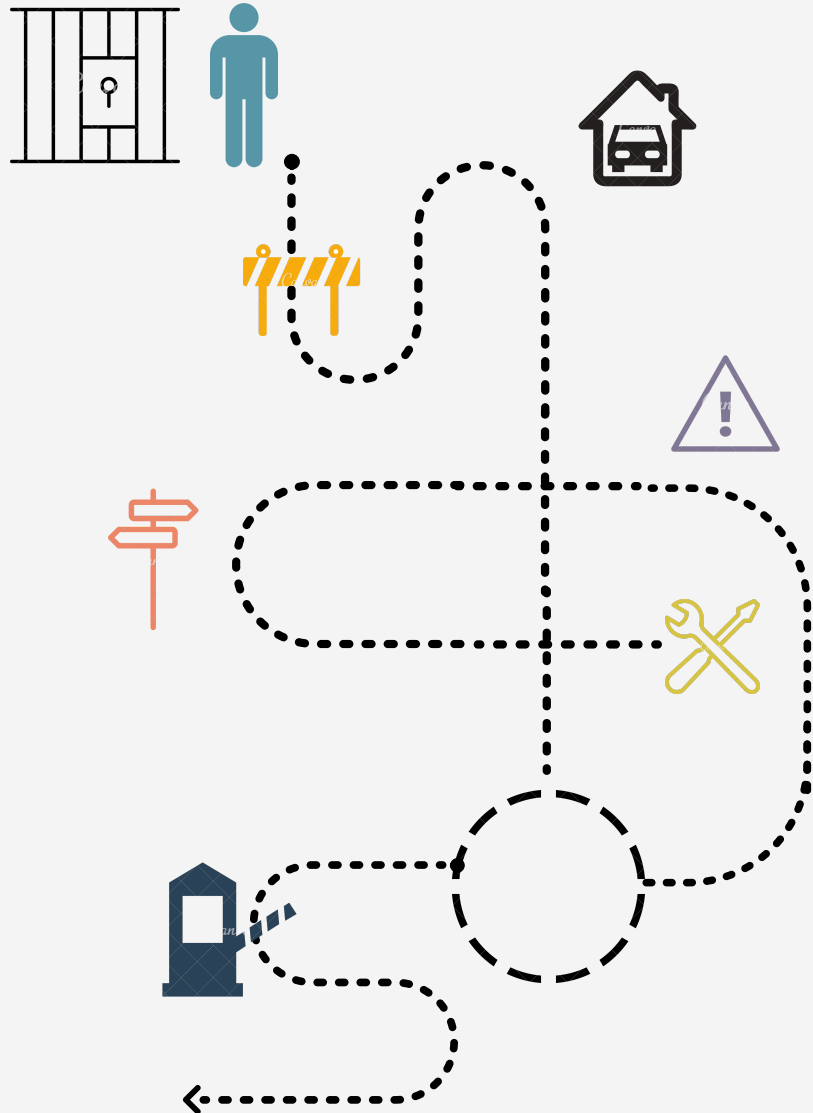
Randy needs to return to court several times because of probation violations. Each cost him time and money.



Toll: Wait 3 months for public benefits to be reinstated

Randy sat at a public benefits office for 4 hours and was able to see a caseworker. He filled out an application to get his Medicaid and SNAP benefits reinstated, but this will take 3 months.

Randy's Journey After Leaving Jail



These represent just some of the barriers faced by people leaving the jail, particularly young people with mental health conditions. Successfully re-integrating into one's community is impeded by roadblocks at nearly every step. The Road Map Initiative is working to identify these roadblocks and support data-driven solutions for people in the criminal justice system faced with housing instability and health issues.

THE ROAD MAP INITIATIVE

ROAD BLOCKS ENCOUNTERED AFTER LEAVING JAIL



Ana is a 21-year-old mother of three. She lives in public housing with her children and husband. She is a victim of domestic violence and has left her husband several times to receive drop-in services and homeless services from outreach initiatives. She also sought drop-in services with her three children at a homeless services center. In total, Ana spent 406 days in a shelter before returning to her home for a full year.

Things continued with her husband and, after a few additional months, a friend convinced her to rob a home in a nearby neighborhood while the family was away. They were later caught, and she was charged with felony robbery and made to wait in jail for 7 months. While there, her children and husband were kicked out of their public housing due to his drug use and moved into a cousin's home.

ANA'S JOURNEY



Fork in the Road: Difficult Choices

Ana is released from jail but does not feel safe to return to her abusive husband. She must decide whether to move back in with him or to contact her relatives to see with whom she can stay.



Rest Stop: Place to Stay

Ana is allowed to stay the first week with her mother, who then tells her that she must move out. However, Ana cannot find or afford housing on her own.



Broken Home: Abusive Husband

Ana has no other options except to move back with her husband, but her record is putting them all at risk for losing public housing. She is trying to figure out how to move out and get full custody of her kids.



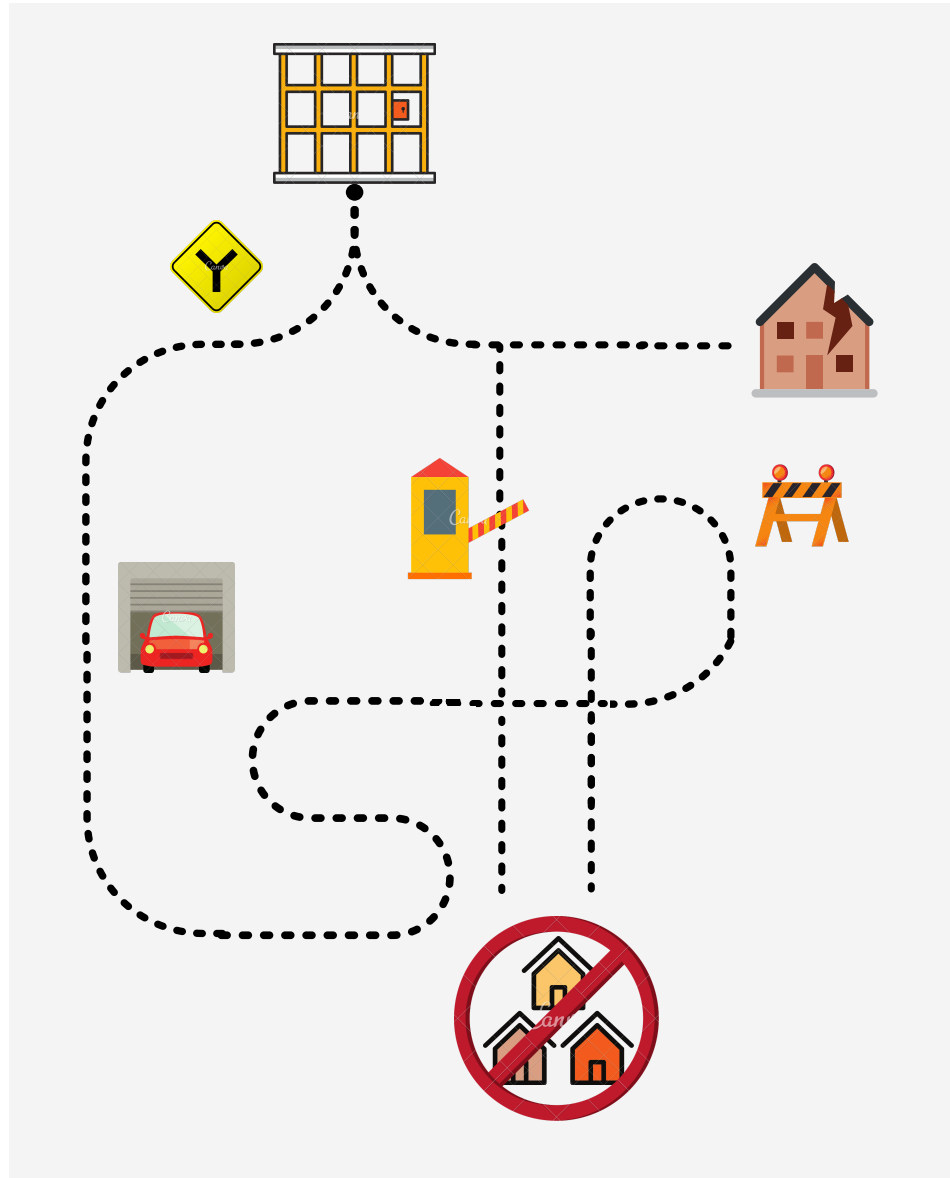
Toll: Employment Difficulties

Ana has never been employed and doesn't know how to attain a job. She tries to access employment supports, but there is a long waitlist for services. She also cannot afford childcare, so her job options are limited.



Construction: Hazards & Delay

She wants to get her kids away from her husband, so she begins the lengthy process of trying to gain full custody. This involves attorney fees, several court appearances, and emotional stress.



Community Re-Integration is Difficult

Community re-integration for people leaving the criminal justice system is often fraught with societal barriers, even beyond those depicted here. The Road Map Initiative has identified that young people accessing homeless services as part of a family is a common demographic profile in homeless services data. With this information and analysis of system processes and public policy, the Road Map Initiative aims to support data-driven solutions to remove barriers posed to people involved in the criminal justice system.

THE ROAD MAP INITIATIVE

ROAD BLOCKS ENCOUNTERED AFTER LEAVING JAIL



Meet Tom.

Tom is a 50-year-old white male and Chicago native who has worked construction all his life. Five years ago, Tom was involved in a car accident and is no longer able to perform construction jobs. He was prescribed opioids to manage the pain related to his injuries for the first month; however, as time passed he developed an addiction. Since Tom does not qualify for Social Security Disability Insurance, he attempted to find work through odd jobs at restaurants and for contractors. He struggled to afford necessities and soon fell behind on his rental payments. Homeless, Tom was caught for petty theft of food.

TOM'S JOURNEY



Roadblock: Shelter Full

Tom is released from jail at 7:00pm and must find a place to stay. He has no money or way to arrange transportation. Tom walks around the neighborhood until he is picked up by police, who take him to a local shelter. The shelter is already full.



Rest Stop: Stay in SRO

Tom cannot get a housing voucher due to his criminal record. So, Tom moved into a single room occupancy (SRO) after four weeks of bouncing between shelters.



Fuel Pump: Odd Jobs

Tom again attempts to work, but each odd job is barely enough earnings to get him through the week. He was arrested a second time for petty theft.



Traffic Light: Probation

As part of his second release, Tom is placed on probation. He has to meet with his probation officer every other day, which further prevents him from steady employment. He uses most of his money on transportation, and can no longer afford his SRO.



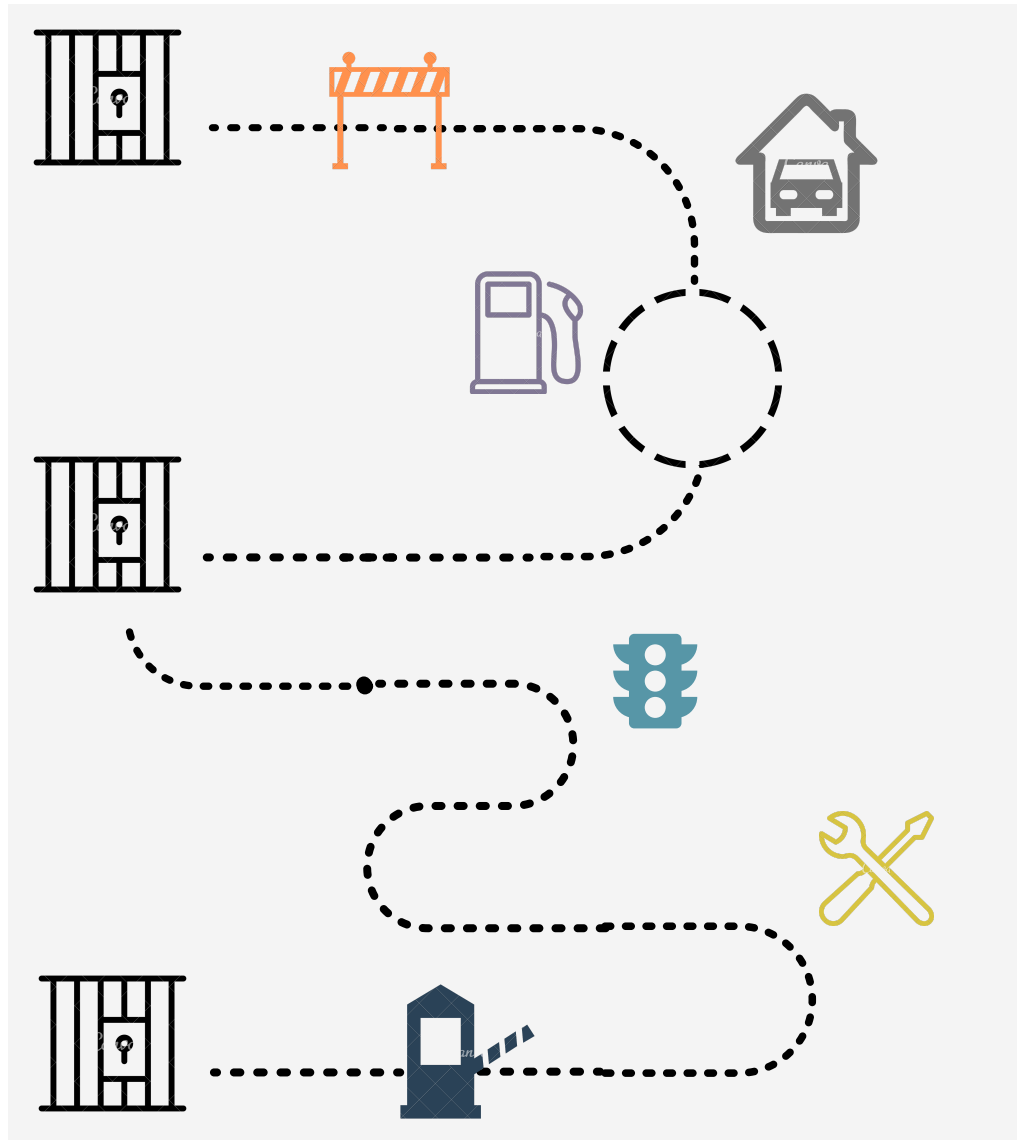
Maintenance: Treatment Program

Tom enrolls in a substance use treatment program for his opioid addiction. He stays there for 30 days. Afterwards, he can't afford a recovery home and his risk of relapse increases.



Toll: Homeless Count Reset

Since Tom stayed in a residential treatment program, his count of days spent homeless restarts at zero. He scores very low on an assessment for housing services. Homeless again, he returns to opioids and is caught stealing to support his addiction.



Tom represents a profile found by data analyses of the Road Map Initiative of an older person with multiple vulnerabilities who cycles between homelessness and jail. These represent just some of the difficulties faced by people, particularly those with substance use disorders. This document is 1 in a 3-part series.

