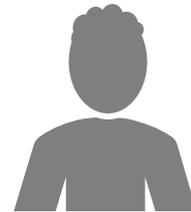# MY BEST LIFE

How tech could help young people

Jared's story

Jared is working his first full-time job in a hotel. He has struggled with anxiety in the past and spoke to the school counsellor. Since then he has been using coping mechanisms he learnt from his counsellor to manage his illness.

Jared is living at home, saving up enough money for a deposit so that he can move out. But he tends to dip into his savings when he's feeling particularly anxious or down, limiting his saving and making him feel worse in the long run.

Without tech

Jared does not know where to turn for support. He does try a Google search but there are so many services and he doesn't know which one is right for him. Some of them are also a bit of a journey, which he would struggle to fit around work. He spends a few weeks worrying and getting more ill. His girlfriend pushes him to get some help and suggests he goes to see his GP.

Jared has never spoken to this GP before and doesn't feel comfortable explaining everything he has been feeling. The GP refers Jared to wellness course. It helps, but isn't quite the right fit for his needs.

The support from the wellness course is enough for Jared to keep going but not really to push forward and he ends up feeling stuck and despondent.

Jared is battling with the *snakes* of housing affordability and poor mental health. He lacks the foothold of *state of mind* and *knowledge*, and his *gatekeeper*, the GP, hasn't quite got him on the right track.

The tool: Services map

Why it is needed: Young people often are not sure where to get help, at the same time they do not trust a lot of the authority figures that offer signposting.

How it would work: Using a pre-existing platform (eg, Google maps), the tool would let users select the type of support they require (eg, mental health), alongside other fields (eg, open late). It would then show them services in their area flagged on the map. Users could also rate and review services to let other young people know which ones they would feel comfortable in.

Key things to consider: The biggest challenge with this intervention is keeping the database of organisations are up to date and provides an accurate picture of services.

With tech

Jared does not know where to turn for support. He tries a Google search and finds the services map. He searches for somewhere that is near his job and that has flexible opening times so he can go before or after work.

The map shows him a couple of places, one of which has a good user reviews. He checks it out and, knowing so many other people have trusted them, feels comfortable telling them about his experiences. They provide him with some counselling, which he finds helpful, as well as referring him to a money management advice service.
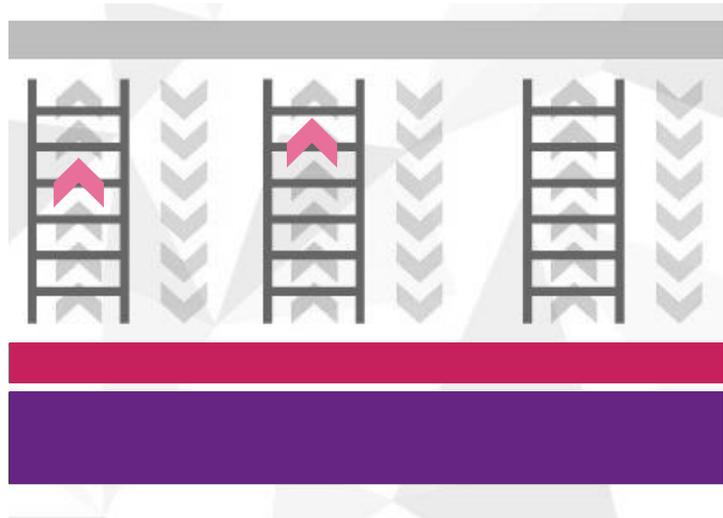
The counselling helps Jared to feel much more confident going forward. This shows at work and he gets promoted. He is handling his money better, and is able to save more as a result of this and the promotion. The counselling service is also able to help him with the new challenges the promotion brings.

With help from *gatekeepers* at the counselling service, helping his *state of mind*, Jared has *expanded his income options*, *feels more happy more of the time*, and is progressing towards *independent living*.

This persona is based on the experiences of people we spoke to during our *My best life* research. For the full report, more personas, and an interactive user experience map, visit thinkNPC.org/MyBestLife.