

MY BEST LIFE

How tech could help young people

Magan's story

Magan moved to London from Somalia to live with his father. He doesn't have a great relationship with him. He is quite comfortable reading in English but can't speak it fluently, which makes it hard for him to engage with services. As a result, he spends a lot of time sleeping rough or staying with friends when he isn't able to stay at home. Magan wants to open his own business one day. One day, Magan and his father have a big row, and he has to leave the family home.



Without tech

Magan uses his phone to search for help. He finds a local hostel to stay at. When he arrives there are some leaflets about different services but he can't see how they help him to get out of his current situation.

He manages to get a job handing out flyers for a local nightclub. It's irregular work, and it doesn't give him a chance to get a feel for a stable working life.

Magan thinks about talking to some of the youth workers in the hostel but they always seem too busy. He continues to muddle along doing short-term part-time work but struggles to get on the right track to start to live the life he wants to live.



Magan lacks the footholds of *knowledge* and *networks*, and is struggling to build relations with the *gatekeepers* that can help him. He also faces *family breakdown*, *housing affordability*, and a *lack of employment opportunities*.

The tool: Virtual caseworker

Why it is needed: To remain motivated, young people want to understand how the steps they take and services they are access are helping them progress towards their best life.

How it would work: Young people download an app containing an interactive version of the 'My best life' diagram. They would select the outcome they wish to achieve and identify where they feel they are now. The tool would then suggest nearby services or organisations that could help them to get to the next step on the ladder, or face a challenge they are currently experiencing. The app would also provide a way for them to record their thoughts, activities and achievements as they advance, to help them track their progress.

Key things to consider: This would need a significant amount of data about different services (similar to the services map). It would also require a feel for how these services interact. In particular, it would need to know how to signpost for urgent interventions when challenges are encountered.



With tech

Magan uses his phone to search for help and finds two things: a local hostel to stay at, and a link to the virtual caseworker app. He downloads the app and tells it he wants to work full time.

The app directs him to a local careers advice charity, who identify that Magan will first need a lot of help with his language skills. They pair him up with a volunteer from the Somali community for language coaching, and mentoring. She also introduces him to some others in the community.

Magan makes notes on the app recording his progress. This helps to keep him motivated as his language skills improve. His mentor also helps him get some part-time work at a restaurant, which gives him some reliable income and a little work experience.

After a few months, the app prompts him to see if ready to go to the next step, and points him towards some local opportunities for education and training. He sees one local project which he likes the look of offering apprenticeships.

While he is preparing to apply Magan does a few fewer shifts at the restaurant and finds he is not managing to pay his bills. This starts to worry him, so he selects the debt is a concern on the app. It points him towards a charity that provides a short interest-free loans to help him plug the gap.

With references from his mentor and restaurant, Magan lands an apprenticeship to become a plumber, putting him on the first step to one day owning his own business.

With greater *knowledge, networks, and support from gatekeepers*, Magan is able to get *more experience and learn new skills*, as well as increase his *social activities*.



This persona is part of NPC's *My best life* research. For the full report, more personas, and an interactive user experience map, visit thinkNPC.org/MyBestLife.