PART 1: THE PLAN INDIANAPOLIS COORDINATED COMMUNITY PLAN TO **RE:SOLVE** HOMELESSNESS FOR YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

RE



WE HAVE A VISION FOR INDIANAPOLIS—A VISION **RE:** REMOVING THE STIGMA, REHOMING OUR DISCARDED YOUTH, AND RESOLVING INDY'S YOUTH HOMELESSNESS, ONCE AND FOR ALL.

Abandoned by parents, fleeing domestic violence, kicked out after coming out as LGBTQ: these are some of the key reasons youth and young adults (YYA) end up alone and in crisis every year. These YYA are still developing physically, emotionally, and intellectually, and the trauma of home instability can lead to lifelong consequences. Lower educational attainment, difficulty in securing and maintaining employment, untreated mental health and medical issues, and a spiral into housing instability lasting far into their adult years are all risks.

Changing this negative direction into a positive is possible, and we owe our young citizens the opportunities to succeed and thrive. We believe YYA homelessness in Indianapolis can be solved if the community comes together to act, and we have adopted the bold goal of ending YYA homelessness in Indianapolis by July 1, 2022.

In forming this plan, YYA voices were collected through surveys, focus groups, and participation in the actual planning process. We believe that youth and young adults must have an integral part in solving their homelessness; we aim to avoid the adultism that often leaves YYA disenfranchised and unwilling to engage. But realizing this goal cannot be done by these youth alone. It will take commitment from all of us– from elected officials, private and public funders, the foster care system, juvenile justice, homeless youth providers...from the entire community.

It's time to rally around our young citizens. We are responsible. Together, we can-and will-end YYA homelessness in Indianapolis.

RE:ENVISION

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WE CAN **RECAN PROVISION** YA HOMELESSNESS

WHO ARE WE?

INDIANAPOLIS CONTINUUM OF CARE

The Indianapolis Continuum of Care (CoC) is a collaborative and engaged coalition of public and private agencies and individuals who are dedicated to preventing and ending homelessness in the City of Indianapolis. Throughout the development of this plan, two key groups within the CoC provided insights and guidance about the homeless situation that youth and young adults face. The Homeless Youth Taskforce is a committee that focuses specifically on youth and young adults ages 12-24 experiencing homelessness, and the Youth Action Board (YAB) is comprised of youth and young adults who are currently or were previously homeless. Both groups offer continuing expertise and guidance and actively took part in the development of this plan, including its vision, the system-wide values needed to end homelessness, and the key strategies to move our work forward.

OUR VISION

Drawing on evidence-based practices, this plan proposes a key vision and values that guide the oversight and implementation of the strategies within. Prioritizing the increase of housing options for youth and young adults remains the foundation for the plan; however, an increase in housing alone will not address the complexity of needs, barriers, and systemic challenges that youth and young adults often face. Engaging with multiple systems to address education, mental health, health care, and social, environmental, and economic needs will be just as critical as we create effective solutions to homelessness. These realities help forge the key community vision:

WE BELIEVE EVERY YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT HAS THE RIGHT TO BE HOUSED AND CONNECTED TO CARE.

FIRST, A FEW DEFINITIONS

DEFINING HOMELESSNESS AMONG YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

For the purposes of this plan, youth and young adult homelessness will be defined as the lack of regular, fixed, and adequate nighttime housing among persons aged 12-24. Throughout the plan, the terms "youth" and "young adults" are used to describe two age ranges, which may also be collectively referred to as "YYA."

"Youth" is defined as minors aged 12-17 who are not accompanied by a parent, quardian, or other adult. Most minors who encounter homelessness face the experience with a parent or guardian and, so, have additional mechanisms of support. (Minors accompanied by a parent or guardian, in general, will not be addressed in this plan, as they are considered to be part of a family unit; family strategies, including targeted strategies for children within families, are included in the CoC's efforts to end family homelessness.) Unaccompanied youth face unique challenges, including difficulty accessing health services, mandated reporting to the foster care system, the inability to sign leases, and the need to complete school independently. Additionally, the Indianapolis community lacks meaningful service offerings to this group, unless they are identified through a school point of entry or are placed in foster care.

"Young adults" are considered separately within the plan and are defined as people ages 18-24. As with youth, the plan addresses only those young adults who are unaccompanied by a parent or guardian. (Those accompanied by parents or guardians are considered in the CoC's efforts to address family homelessness.) Within this population, strategies and data are separated by pregnant and parenting young adults and individual young adults. This is due to the unique challenges that arise when facing homelessness while pregnant or with children, including the needs of pediatric care, child care, school support, increased housing size, family unification opportunities, and other issues. (Youth who are experiencing homelessness and who are pregnant or have children are not commonly identified in Indianapolis and are included within the youth strategies.)

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS (YYA)

YOUTH -

Minors (under age 18) who are not accompanied by a parent, guardian, or other adult; pregnant and parenting minors are also considered in this category

INDIVIDUAL YOUNG ADULTS -

Persons aged 18-24 who are not accompanied by a parent or guardian and do not have children with them

PREGNANT AND

PARENTING YOUNG ADULTS -

Persons aged 18-24 who are either pregnant or are currently parenting children and have their children with them

DEFINING HOMELESSNESS IS COMPLICATED.

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) tends to focus on literal homelessness through its Continuum of Care (CoC) and Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG), while the US Department of Education (DOE) takes a broader view of homelessness, including those who are doubled up, couch surfing, and in other unstable housing situations. Recognizing the unique vulnerabilities of the YYA age group, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) takes the broadest approach to defining homelessness and is the view that has been adopted by those working on this plan. Following USICH's example, this plan considers the needs of youth and young adults who fit into four distinct categories:

- Literally Homeless
- Imminently At Risk of Homelessness
- Unstably Housed
- Fleeing Dangerous or Life-Threatening Situations

CATEGORIES OF YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT HOMELESSNESS

LITERALLY HOMELESS -

YYA who are in shelter, transitional housing, hotels or motels paid for by the government or charity, or sleeping on the streets, in parks, or other places not meant for human habitation

IMMINENTLY AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS –

YYA who will lose housing (including doubled-up situations) within the next 14 days with no other safe place to stay and no money or other resources for housing

UNSTABLY HOUSED -

YYA who are classified as homeless under federal statutes, including the McKinney-Vento Homelessness Assistance Act and the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA); YYA who have been couch surfing with multiple moves in the last two months and can be expected to have continued housing instability

FLEEING DANGEROUS OR LIFE THREATENING SITUATIONS -

YYA who are escaping domestic violence and/or sexual assault, who trade sex for housing ("survival sex"), who are escaping sex trafficking, and/or who experience violence or threats of violence because of sexual orientation or gender identity

KEY GROUPS

As highlighted in the "Needs" section of this plan, several key groups are disproportionately reflected in the YYA homeless population:

- Youth aged 12-17
- LGBTQ populations
- · Youth with special needs or disabilities
- Pregnant or parenting young adults
- Youth of color
- Young adults experiencing chronic homelessness
- YYA formerly in foster care
- Victims of sex trafficking or domestic violence
- YYA engaged or formerly engaged with the juvenile justice system

While these traits, in and of themselves, are not necessarily factors that lead to homelessness, the disproportionate representation of these groups among those experiencing homelessness in our community is important to consider. In order to craft an effective response to homelessness among YYA, a broad range of programs must address the needs and specific considerations of these groups.

It's important to reiterate: This plan does not suggest causation among any of these subpopulations and homelessness. Instead, it recognizes that programs should take the appropriate efforts to ensure cultural competence and inclusivity. This includes taking into consideration staff demographics that mirror these traits, training and awareness of unique needs for YYA, and opportunities to include YYA in the delivery and evaluation of the services meant to assist them.

RE:DEFINE THE NUMBERS, IN A NUTSHELL

2,251 TOTAL INDIANAPOLIS HOMELESS YYA were reported in 2016, including 410 unaccompanied youth and 383 pregnant and parenting young adults (1 in 2) youth ages 13-17 who experience homelessness do so WITHOUT A PARENT, GUARDIAN, OR OTHER ADULT 50% of all female YYA experiencing homelessness are actively fleeing domestic VIOLENCE OR SEXUAL TRAFFICKING

59% of youth and

of young adults HAVE MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES **1 IIN 3** YYA experiencing homelessness have a

SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER 5% of youth and 7% of young adults TRADE SEX for a place to stay 69% of young adults experiencing homelessness are AFRICAN AMERICAN

25% of youth ages 13-17 and 1 in 3 young adults experiencing

homelessness identify as

28%

of young adults were living in a place NOT FIT FOR HUMAN HABITATION when identified by the homeless system

RESPOND THE PLAN, IN 5 STEPS

Ending homelessness will never be as easy as 1-2-3. But this is a start. Below is an overview of the in-depth strategy we've put together toward achieving our goal.

To view the full plan, go to page 39.

1: OPTIMIZE

Optimize the crisis response system to reduce the length of time that youth and young adults spend homeless

2: INCREASE

Increase availability and access to safe, supportive, and permanent housing for all youth and young adults experiencing housing instability

3: EXPAND

Expand and enhance wraparound services and coordinated approaches to increase housing stability and prevent returns to homelessness

4: ENGAGE

Engage intersecting systems in a shared approach to prevent youth and young adults from being released into homelessness

5: EMPOWER

Empower leadership entities to align resources, enable collaboration, and maintain transparency with the community in order to prevent and end youth and young adult homelessness

IT'S TIME TO **RESTREATE** THE STATISTICS

THE NUMBERS DON'T LIE

THERE IS A NEED

The Indianapolis Continuum of Care conducted an in-depth needs assessment about YYA as part of developing this plan. This assessment utilized various original data sources, including surveys and focus groups with youth providers and YYA experiencing homelessness, data from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), data directly from the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE), Point-in-Time (PIT) data, and data from providers not currently using HMIS. These data sources were analyzed collectively by Coalition for Homelessness Intervention and Prevention (CHIP) staff. researchers at the Indiana University Public Policy Institute (IU PPI), and Abt Associates to create a comprehensive needs assessment and, where possible, make connections between different systems.

The Homeless Youth Taskforce and the Youth Action Board of the Indianapolis CoC first identified the need for the assessment; CHIP then acted as the lead agency for the needs assessment by securing the funding from the Lilly Endowment Inc. and managing the overall process. IU PPI took the lead in developing tools, seeking IRB approval, and assuring the overall process met research and evaluative criteria. Abt Associates was contracted to help the CoC define evidence-based youth program models, identify the unduplicated number of YYA experiencing homelessness, and to complete client pathways and system modeling for housing units through engagement with the Homeless Youth Taskforce and the Youth Action Board.

AND IT'S PRETTY BIG

The scope of the assessment was limited to the geographic area of Marion County, Indianapolis and focused on the year 2016, which was the most recently completed year. Indianapolis had a total population of 941,229 in 2016 according the US Census Bureau, ranking as the fourteenth largest metropolitan area in the US.

In 2016, 12,055 individuals experienced homelessness in the Indianapolis metropolitan area. Approximately 80% of individuals experiencing homelessness were experiencing it for the first time.

Demographics for those experiencing homelessness include 60% men, 38% women, and 2% transgender; the homeless population is disproportionately African American (54% versus 29% of the general population), and Caucasians are underrepresented (37% versus 65% of the general population) with 4% identifying as Hispanic/Latino, 4% identifying as multiracial, and 1% identifying as Asian.

Regarding age, 20% are under 18 and 10% are in the 18-24 age range, with the dominance of those experiencing homelessness in our community in the age ranges of 50-61 (22%) and 25-34 (26%).

The preceding data came from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and covered those who are literally homeless, and thus was limiting in comparison to how this report defined youth and young adult homelessness.

THE NUMBERS

The needs assessment considered a broader definition of homelessness for youth and young adults, including those who lacked safe, regular, and adequate housing, and those imminently at risk of becoming homeless. The assessment focused on three primary subpopulations: unaccompanied minors ages 12-17, individual young adults ages 18-24 experiencing homelessness, and pregnant and parenting young adults ages 18-24. Additionally, the needs assessment focused on collecting data that did not exist in any data systems, including that on LGBTQ populations, YYA who were victims of sex trafficking, YYA of color, and YYA engaged or previously engaged with the foster and juvenile justice systems. While the assessment considered 12 year olds whenever possible (at the request of the Homeless Youth Taskforce), much of the data collected about minors was done starting at age 13, as the decision to include 12 years olds was determined later into the process.

YYA HOMELESSNESS IN INDIANAPOLIS

One key component of the needs assessment was determining the annual number of youth and young adults that experience homelessness in Indianapolis. Because the data collection of this group is fragmented, it required an integration and deduplication of several data sets. Ultimately, this led to a deduplicated number among the three priority populations: unaccompanied minors ages 13-17, individual young adults ages 18-24, and pregnant and parenting young adults ages 18-24. While the unstably doubled up YYA is likely an underestimation, even these numbers highlight the critical needs in our community. data was used from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), as well as data from homeless providers who don't use HMIS, local domestic violence providers, and school systems. Whenever possible, a deduplication between actual data sets was completed. However, when that was not possible, each individual organization was surveyed to most effectively determine the overlap between their data and other data sets to ensure reasonable deduplication. It's also important to note that an additional 460 minors experiencing homeless with parents or guardians were also identified and are not included in the data. Thus, the total number of youth age 13-17 experiencing homelessness, including both accompanied and unaccompanied minors, was 870.

The Census Bureau estimated that on July 1, 2016, Marion County had a population of 855,164, of which there were 60,677 youth ages 13-17 and 89,217 young adults ages 18-24. These numbers allowed us to determine the scope of homelessness in Indianapolis, and the assessment found that 1 in 100 youth ages 13-17 experience homelessness in Indianapolis, and half of them do so on their own. Additionally, 1 in 50 young adults ages 18-24 experienced homelessness and 1 in 5 of them were either pregnant or parenting at the time of homelessness.

It seems likely there are youth and young adults experiencing homelessness that are not entering into the homeless system and are not represented in this count. Survey data (highlighted later in this report) showed that 65% to 75% of YYA experiencing homelessness reported that they were not accessing services at a community provider that would have caused them to be counted in the numbers noted, suggesting the numbers are potentially much higher.

In order to establish the most accurate number,

	LITERALLY HOMELESS	UNSTABLY HOUSED	TOTAL
Unaccompanied Minors	373	37	410
Individual Young Adults ages 18-24	1,279	179	1,458
Parenting Young Adults ages 18-24	348	35	383
TOTAL	2,000	251	2,251

2016 INDIANAPOLIS HOMELESS YYA POPULATIONS

MISSED OPPORTUNITIES: NATIONAL ESTIMATES

Missed Opportunities: National Estimates summarizes the results of a national survey conducted by Voices of Youth Count. This survey estimates the percentage of United States youth, ages 13 to 25, who have experienced unaccompanied homelessness at least once during a recent 12-month period. The results of the study are alarming.

Researched by Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, Voices of Youth Count contacted more than 26,000 individuals through phone surveys, as well as conducted in-depth interviews and brief YYA surveys with representative groups. The study indicates that at least 1 in 30 adolescent minors ages 13 to 17 and 1 in 10 young adults ages 18 to 25 faces some form of homelessness each year. Assuming the Voices of Youth Count findings are accurate, estimates for youth and young adult homelessness for Indianapolis can be established.

If 1 in 30 youth ages 13-17 experience unaccompanied homelessness, approximately 2,022 Indianapolis youth face some kind of homelessness in one year; and if 1 in 10 young adults ages 18-24 experience the same, approximately 8,922 Indianapolis young adults would be homeless in a given year. Therefore, as many as 10,944 youth and young adults experienced homelessness in 2016 in Indianapolis. The research also suggested that many of those YYA never enter into the homeless system, which is why they are not showing up in the Indianapolis homeless data. Given the number verified through this assessment, these much higher numbers would suggest only 20% of youth and young adults experiencing homelessness are being served by the homeless system. However, for the purposes of this report and for determining the housing needs for YYA, only the numbers captured through one of the verified data sets will be used.

In addition to the annual numbers, based on the data collected, we could confirm that 24% of young adults and 49% of all female young adults who were homeless were actively fleeing domestic violence or sex trafficking, a number that is most certainly under-reported, as we were unable to collect this data point from several providers who supplied data.

Given national research, as many as **2,022** youth ages 13-17 and **8,922** young adults ages 18-24, **TOTALLING**

10,944,

experienced homelessness in 2016 in Indianapolis, although only 20% of this total data was captured by the homeless system **2,251** Indianapolis YYA experienced homelessness in 2016, of which almost **400** were pregnant or parenting young adults, and more than **400** were unaccompanied minors

NEARLY HALF

of youth ages 13-17 that experienced homelessness did so without a parent, guardian, or family member **1 in 100** youth ages 13-17 in Indianapolis experienced homelessness in 2016

1 in 50 young adults ages 18-24 in Indianapolis experienced homelessness in 2016

20% of young adults experiencing homelessness were either pregnant or parenting children at the time of their homelessness **24%** of all young adults and **49%** of all female young adults experiencing homelessness were actively fleeing a domestic violence or sex trafficking situation

SYSTEM MODELING

System modeling is a technique used to understand the ideal set of housing and services interventions needed to end homelessness for the YYA who present to a community's homeless system each year. Once this ideal model has been developed, it can be used to advocate for increased resources from the public and private sectors. This needs assessment used system modeling to identify the needed units for various interventions, specifically for youth and young adults in the Indianapolis community. The program types identified are defined within this report and should be referred to when considering best practices. The models were specifically adapted to Indianapolis and include definitions and traits, as well as potential adaptations that are needed to effectively address YYA homelessness.

System modeling does identify the annual need for housing and services, assuming all YYA would engage in housing given the opportunity. While the current system may lack many of these interventions, these numbers act as a guide for planning and for providers and investors to target services and resources to the most needed interventions.

This system modeling assumes that some laws regarding minors may be addressed to reduce barriers to housing, such as mandatory reporting to the Department of Child Services, ability to sign leases at ages 16 and 17, and emancipation simplification. Additionally, very few pregnant and parenting youth and young adults enter into Continuum of Care programs, so this additionally assumes better outreach efforts have been established through the Coordinated Entry System. Finally, the modeling does include some youth and young adults who face homelessness under the broader definition identified earlier in this report, such as unstable couch surfing and those imminently at risk of homelessness. However, 90% or greater of this modeling is needed for YYA experiencing literal homelessness.

In order to create effective system modeling, both an annual number of YYA experiencing homelessness, as well as the ideal pathway through homeless providers for each population must be identified. Determining the pathways can be a complicated process. For instance, some YYA may be diverted from shelter, and others may need to enter shelter temporarily. For those who enter, there will be an ideal length of stay, generally less than 30 days.

While the majority will move on to permanent housing, some may need transitional opportunities. For those who receive temporary rental assistance, it is also helpful to understand how long they will need the assistance and if they will need follow up services afterward.

A chart of pathways was developed for this project based on information from the HMIS data patterns and from feedback from service providers, YYA experiencing homelessness, and from best practices learned from other communities. The final chart can be requested from CHIP.

PROGRAM TYPE	UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AGES 13-17	INDIVIDUAL YOUNG ADULTS AGES 18-24	PREGNANT OR PARENTING YOUNG ADULTS AGES 18-24	TOTAL
Diversion Services & Assistance	68	194	74	336
Follow-Up Services	55	69	8	132
Host Homes	83	29	0	112
Emergency Shelter	11	66	15	92
Transitional Housing	43	59	15	117
Rapid Re-Housing	41	745	225	1,011
Non-Time-Limited Supportive Housing	0	175	16	191
TOTAL	301	1,337	353	1,991

"PEOPLE ALWAYS SAY THAT 'THE SYSTEM IS BROKEN.' WHICH SYSTEM IS BROKEN? YES. HEALTHCARE, HOUSING, EDUCATION—YOU NAME IT, THE SYSTEM IS BROKEN, AND IT IS ALL ROOTED IN OUR COUNTRY'S HISTORY OF RACISM."

"People let me down, so I knew stable housing would only happen with me. I just wanted a place to call home."

THE PEOPLE

YYA DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographics of youth and young adults experiencing homelessness are important to understand, and they highlight the great racial disparity impacted by this terrible struggle. Whenever possible, race/ethnicity, gender, age, and sexual orientation were reviewed in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), and among the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) data sets. It's important to understand that both of these data sets are limited. Therefore, when anonymous surveys were conducted among Indianapolis YYA, more in-depth questions were asked and are highlighted in the survey reports section (found on page 21). In HMIS, the most comprehensive demographics were reviewed in complete records of 111 unaccompanied minors, 672 individual young adults, and 259 pregnant or parenting young adults, all of whom became homeless in 2016. Additionally, we considered information about 259 unaccompanied minors collected from the Indiana Department of Education.

RACE/ETHNICITY

Overall, YYA of color were overrepresented, with the largest disproportion occurring among African Americans. 69% of YYA identify as African American in the HMIS data and 59% in the IDOE data set. In the HMIS data system, race and ethnicity are tracked separately, allowing for overlap between race and ethnicity, while the IDOE system tracks race and ethnicity as one data element, preventing overlap. In HMIS, 6% identify as Hispanic/Latino and 11% within the IDOE set. Caucasians (22% versus 23%) and multi-racial populations (5% versus 6%) are nearly identical in both systems. The surveys completed are also representative, with 52% African American, 21% Caucasian, and 18% multi-racial. Additionally, the surveys had a higher participation rate among Hispanic/Latinos at 17%.

About 80% of YYA experiencing homelessness are racial/ethnic minorities with African Americans accounting for about 70% of young adults and 60% of youth

GENDER

In the HMIS data set, youth and young adults have a nearly equal distribution among males and females, as does the IDOE data set. However, unaccompanied youth in HMIS show some disparity with young females finding a greater percentage over males (58% versus 42%). In the survey data, females are disproportionately represented (58% versus 35%) among ages 18-24 and similarly represented among unaccompanied minors.

Nearly 60% of YYA experiencing homelessness are female

"MOST OF THE SERVICES YOU FIND ARE FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN. THE SHELTERS FOR MEN ARE NOT WELCOMING TO LGBTQ+ YOUTH, AND I DO NOT FEEL SAFE GOING TO THOSE."

AGE

Within the HMIS data set, youth experiencing homelessness were nearly evenly distributed across the ages of 13-17, meaning the same number of youth experiencing homelessness were found in each age. Similarly, unaccompanied youth show a fairly even spread among these ages in the IDOE data set. However, in HMIS there is a progressive increase among young adults; there are fewer young adults experiencing homelessness at age 18 (10%), but the number progressively increases through age 24 (20%).

Young adults are disproportionately homeless as they get older

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Identifying youth and young adults experiencing homelessness by sexual orientation has a unique set of complications. For instance, in general, for HMIS and IDOE, these data elements are not collected. Asking for this data can be sensitive and can be a barrier to access services. Within the HMIS data set, a smaller subset of programs serving runaway and homeless YYA do ask the question about sexual orientation and have identified 7% of their total population as LGBTQ. During this needs assessment, providers admitted to often feeling uncomfortable asking questions about sexual orientation, and YYA also noted that they would be more likely to be honest during surveys of anonymous data rather than name-linked data collection, as seen in HMIS. Additionally, the LGBTQ YYA experiencing homelessness clearly noted that some existing providers were not as friendly, and they would be less likely to access services as a result. The anonymous survey results found a much larger number of YYA that identified as LGBTQ, ranging between 25-33% as LGBTQ and 8-16% as transgender. More details about the LGBTQ population can be found in the survey results section on page 21.

25-33% of YYA who experience homelessness are LGBTQ

THE INFO

HOMELESS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

It's import to remember the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) tracks only youth and young adults who are literally homeless and enter into the homeless system through street outreach, shelters or transitional housing, or enter a permanent housing option. Because so many shelter beds were not in HMIS in 2016, this data is limited to about 56% of those experiencing homelessness (1,420 individual records), but it highlights some unique factors not tracked in other sources. Of the total youth ages 13-17 that were tracked in HMIS, 25% were unaccompanied minors. Data for youth presented in this section is representative of those unaccompanied minors, only.

Prior residence for those who enter into homelessness is tracked, although the information is optional and not always reported. The chart at the bottom of the page represents data gleaned from 119 unaccompanied minors and 1,301 young adults ages 18-24.

Of the unaccompanied minors ages 13-17 reported in HMIS, approximately 11% reported having children. Of the young adults ages 18-24 who were tracked in HMIS, 29% reported having children. Nearly half of those had more than one child.

NUMBER OF CHILDREN	PARENTING YOUNG ADULTS AGES 18-24
1	51%
2	29%
3	10%
4	8%
5	2%

Within HMIS, an assessment is completed to identify key barriers to maintaining housing, and the barrier assessment is self-reported by individuals to a homeless service provider. Providers often note that the following percentages are lower than the providers believe them to be, as clients are reluctant to reveal this kind of personal data until long-term relationships are built.

COMMON BARRIERS REPORTED

UNACCOMPANIED MINORS	YOUNG ADULTS
59% report a mental health issue	86% report a mental health issue
31% report a develop- mental disability	33% report a substance use disorder
11% report a chronic health issue	30% report a develop- mental disability

Successfully housing a YYA experiencing homelessness can be best tracked by returns to homelessness. For this measure, an individual who has achieved permanent housing is tracked over a one and two year period to determine if that person becomes homeless again. Based on data collected in HMIS, 87% of unaccompanied minors and 88% of young adults remained housed after one year, and 83% remain housed after two years for both age ranges.

HMIS also tracks many other key outcomes, including length of time homeless, growth in cash income, and gaining public benefits. However, many of these data elements are more meaningful over time. As such, baseline data is being reviewed and will be presented in future needs assessments.

RESIDENCE PRIOR TO ENTERING HOMELESSNESS	UNACCOMPANIED MINORS (AGES 13-17)	YOUNG ADULTS (AGES 18-24)
Living with a family member	42%	15%
Living with a friend	31%	13%
In an emergency shelter or hotel paid for by a charity	13%	38%
Place not fit for human habitation	10%	28%
Hotel/apartment without financial assistance from a charity	4%	6%

HOMELESS YYA SURVEYS

As part of the needs assessment, surveys were distributed to gain better understanding of sexual orientation, educational challenges, and service gaps among YYA experiencing homelessness. The surveys also set out to gain a deeper understanding of some of the characteristics YYA are experiencing with housing instability. Surveys were distributed both electronically and via paper form to traditional providers who serve youth experiencing homelessness, as well as to school liaisons, community centers, a university and college, and to providers who might see YYA but who typically do not interact with the homeless system. This allowed the surveys to reach a much broader range of YYA.

As part of this assessment, initially 177 surveys were conducted with YYA experiencing homelessness. Of the 177 respondents, 37 were unaccompanied minors ages 13-17 and 140 were young adults ages 18-24. A second series of surveys were completed and captured an additional 162 responses, of which 24 were minors. Thus, a total of 61 unaccompanied minors and 278 young adults completed the survey.

YYA EXPERIENCE MULTIPLE TYPES OF HOMELESSNESS IN ONE YEAR BUT OFTEN GET REPORTED IN ONLY ONE CATEGORY. YYA WHO EXPERIENCE MULTIPLE FORMS REPORT HIGHER NEEDS AND GAPS IN SERVICES.

AGES 13-17

- Of those doubled up, 52% also experienced literal homelessness that year
- 73% experienced multiple types of homelessness
- 32% reported couch surfing with a non-family member

AGES 18-24: INDIVIDUALS

- Of those doubled up, 31% also experienced literal homelessness that year
- 27% experienced multiple types of homelessness

AGES 18-24: PARENTING/PREGNANT

- Of those doubled up, 42% also experienced literal homelessness that year
- 47% experienced multiple types of homelessness

YYA OFTEN SEEK HELP BUT FEEL EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS IS UNREALISTIC OR OVERWHELMING.

AGES 13-17

- 89% of youth under 18 were currently attending school, yet only 40% were aware of the McKinney-Vento (homeless) liaisons
- 48% reported meeting with their school counselor or social worker
- 21% reported having an Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- 53% reported that high school graduation did not seem realistic

AGES 18-24: INDIVIDUALS

- Of those not in school, 74% noted lack of financial resources and 72% reported lack of permanent housing as the key factors for being unable to attend post-secondary education
- Of those in school, 44% reported that financial assistance was the key reason for being able to attend school
- 35% enrolled in school were seeking help to pass at least one class
- 78% reported that college graduation did not seem realistic
- In a random sampling of Pell Grant recipients in university, 22% reported housing instability while enrolled in classes

AGES 18-24: PARENTING/PREGNANT

- 60% of parenting young adults report NOT having a GED or high school diploma
- 45% enrolled in school are seeking help to pass at least one class
- 86% reported that college graduation did not seem realistic

THE INFO

YYA OF COLOR ARE DISPROPORTIONATELY REPRESENTED IN THE HOMELESS POPULATION, WITH AFRICAN AMERICANS COMPRISING THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE.

AGES 13-17

- 79% were youth of color:
- 52% African American
- 17% Hispanic/Latino
- 18% Multi-racial
- 9% Other YYA of color

AGES 18-24: INDIVIDUALS

- 75% were young adults of color:
- 54% African American
- 15% Hispanic/Latino
- 11% Multi-racial
- 10% Other YYA of color

AGES 18-24: PARENTING/PREGNANT

- 62% were young adults of color:
- 52% African American
- 18% Hispanic/Latino
- 8% Multi-racial
- 2% Other YYA of color

LGBTQ POPULATIONS ARE DISPROPORTIONATELY HOMELESS AND EXPERIENCE GREATER INSTABILITY.

AGES 13-17

- 33% identified as LGBTQ
- 73% experienced literal homelessness, which is a much greater rate than non-LGBTQ populations (59%)
- 45% experienced doubling up, which is a much lower rate than non-LGBTQ populations (73%). This could possibly account for decreased housing stability among LGBTQ youth
- 82% experienced multiple types of homelessness, which is a greater rate than non-LGBTQ populations (68%)
- 11% were transgender

AGES 18-24: INDIVIDUALS

- 25% identified as LGBTQ
- 35% experienced literal homelessness, which is a lower rate than non-LGBTQ populations (41%)
- 91% experienced doubling up, which is a higher rate than non-LGBTQ populations (86%)
- 8% were transgender

AGES 18-24: PARENTING/PREGNANT

- 27% identified as LGBTQ
- 16% were transgender

SOME YYA EXCHANGE SEX (TERMED "SURVIVAL SEX") FOR A PLACE TO SLEEP.

AGES 13-17

 5% reported exchanging sex for a place to stay AGES 18-24: INDIVIDUALS

• 7% reported exchanging sex for a place to stay

AGES 18-24: PARENTING/PREGNANT

• 11% report exchanging sex for a place to stay

YYA EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS HAVE HIGH RATES OF PARTICIPATION IN THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM, AND MINORS AVOID NEEDED SERVICES OUT OF FEAR OF RETURNING TO THE SYSTEM.

AGES 13-17

- 51% had experience with being in foster care
- 74% resisted accessing services to avoid being reported to DCS
- 64% resisted accessing services out of fear of being returned to their parents' homes
- AGES 18-24: INDIVIDUALS
- 20% had experience with being in foster care

AGES 18-24: PARENTING/PREGNANT

- 36% had experience with being in foster care
- 8% avoided services for fear that their children will be taken into foster care

SOME YYA HAVE A DISABILITY AND NOTE THAT IT MAKES ATTAINING HOUSING MORE DIFFICULT.

AGES 13-17

• 5% report having a disability

AGES 18-24: INDIVIDUALS • 8% report having a disability AGES 18-24: PARENTING/PREGNANT

11% report having a disability

MOST YYA WANT TO LIVE ON THEIR OWN IN AN APARTMENT, EITHER WITH OR WITHOUT A ROOMMATE.

AGES 13-17

- 76% reported they were unable to legally obtain their own living situation due to their age as a key barrier
- 61% want to live in their own apartments, and 39% were willing to return to their parent/ guardian's home if they got along better
- 40% reported difficulty in accessing temporary shelter due to their age

AGES 18-24: INDIVIDUALS

- 78% reported their ideal form of housing was an apartment they could inhabit without the need for ongoing financial assistance
- 75% also noted they would need assistance to gain stability

AGES 18-24: PARENTING/PREGNANT

- 82% reported their ideal form of housing was an apartment they could inhabit without the need for ongoing financial assistance
- 75% also noted they would need assistance to gain stability

SOME YYA WERE HOMELESS AND PREGNANT AT THE SAME TIME, AND MANY OTHERS REPORTED ALREADY HAVING CHILDREN WITH THEM WHEN THEY BECAME HOMELESS.

AGES 13-17

• 3% reported being pregnant

AGES 18-24: INDIVIDUALS

11% reported being pregnant

AGES 18-24: PARENTING/PREGNANT

• 44% reported having children with them while experiencing homelessness

YYA WIDELY REPORT DIFFICULTY ACCESSING SERVICES.

AGES 13-17

- 58% received no services from nonprofits or other community providers
- 69% were turned away from a health care or mental health provider due to their age or the provider's request for parental consent
- 24% were denied other services due to their age
- 57% reported needing help to secure employment
- 19% skipped meals because they lacked enough food
- 30% reported lack of transportation as a key reason for not getting the help they needed

AGES 18-24: INDIVIDUALS

- 61% received no services from nonprofits or other community providers
- 77% reported not knowing where or how to access needed help or services
- 19% reported needing mental healthcare but were unable to access it
- 39% reported needing help to secure employment
- 24% skipped meals because they lacked enough food
- 46% reported being too embarrassed or ashamed to access needed help or services

AGES 18-24: PARENTING/PREGNANT

- 52% received no services from nonprofits or other community providers
- 77% reported not knowing where or how to access needed help or services
- 25% reported having a mental health issue but were not receiving needed help for it
- 42% reported needing help to secure employment
- 29% reported that they and their children skipped meals because they lacked enough food

RE: THEIR STORIES

DEON

"IF THERE IS A ZOMBIE APOCA MPSE, FOLLOW THE HOMELESS YOUTH BECAUSE WE KNOW HOW TO SURVIVE ON THE STREETS WITH NOTHING."

Twenty-one year old Deon has a charming smile, an easy laugh and looks much younger than his age. He became homeless at 18, shortly after he moved out of his foster parents' house to live with his biological parents. "A mistake," he says, because his parents were not capable of providing a stable environment. Constant verbal abuse became physical abuse, forcing Deon to leave home and couch surf with anyone who would allow him to stay.

He eventually landed in an Indianapolis adult shelter, Wheeler Mission, but he did not thrive there. He was asked to leave the program within a few days of his arrival due to anger issues. With no friends to help or shelter to assist him, he became actively homeless and slept on strangers' porches in downtown Indianapolis. "I felt like no one loved me. I wanted to die, because I had no reason to live."

Deon felt like an outcast, because he could not control his explosive temper-a temper, he believes, which stemmed from his depression about his unstable living situation. Eventually, other homeless youth helped him learn how to live on the streets. They treated him like family, showed him where to sleep and introduced him to Outreach Inc.

Deon acknowledges that living on the street is difficult. He has many friends who do not survive well on their own-they are hungry or cold, so they steal, get caught and go to jail.

"Homeless youth are like everyone else and, when stressed, have a breaking point, too. It is difficult for teenagers to survive homelessness when they always had family to depend on. We have a lot of trauma, and because we are young, act the wrong way in stressful situations."

Deon is finally off the streets and has lived in permanent housing for almost a year. Now that he has a home, Deon is hopeful about the future and is motivated to obtain his high school diploma. He hopes to be a truck driver someday and have a wife and children who love him. His wish for his future is simple, but profound: "I want to earn enough money for rent, so I will never be homeless again."

THE INFO

POINT IN TIME COUNT

The Point in Time (PIT) count is a one-day census of those who are experiencing literal homelessness in Indianapolis. In order to be counted, a youth or young adult had to be surveyed in a shelter or transitional housing facility, or living outdoors, in a car, or in a place not fit for human habitation. The Indianapolis CoC conducted its annual Point-in-Time Count on January 25, 2017 and its inaugural Youth Point-in-Time Count on July 10, 2017. The chart below highlights sheltered and unsheltered YYA numbers from both activities.

It's important to understand that the PIT process is limited and represents only those who were identified in one night. Ongoing review of HMIS data suggests increasing numbers of YYA experiencing homelessness, even though the PIT numbers have remained fairly consistent over time.

The Indianapolis CoC included YYA-specific activities within the implementation of its traditional PIT Count on January 25, 2017. Organizations who serve YYA experiencing homelessness formed outreach teams that targeted known locations for unsheltered youth and young adults. In the months leading up to the event, teams met to develop a strong plan to cover the geographic areas, and other teams were also able to identify YYA experiencing homelessness.

In 2017, the Indianapolis CoC conducted its inaugural Youth Point-in-Time count on July 10 with a similar methodology. In both PIT events, data was also obtained from HMIS and from shelter providers not in HMIS, such as Julian Center, Coburn Place, and Wheeler Mission Ministries. HMIS data included sheltered and unsheltered YYA experiencing homelessness. The numbers between the two events were similar, with most identified needs and gaps within 3-5% of each other.

Two notable differences between the two PIT counts was that the summer PIT found significantly more African American female YYA than the January event did, skewing both the female and African American numbers to significant increases in July. Also, three shelters that participated in the January PIT did not participate in the July PIT. If the youth and young adults reported at these sites during January had been similar in July, the PIT could have seen a 10% increase in July over January and may have reduced the overall increases among African American females.

During its annual PIT Count, the Indianapolis CoC also collected data on the number of schoolaged children served under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act on one day. In January 2017, 10 districts reported a total of 3,038 children living in non-permanent housing on a single day. This is an increase from 2016, when 2,947 children were reported. Of all Marion County school systems, the highest percentage of youth was reported by Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS). Of children whose location was reported, 76% were reported as doubled up, 9% were reported to be living in shelters, 9% were reported as unsheltered, and 6% were staying in hotels/motels.

89% were in shelters
44% in January and 59% in July were female
48% in January and 62% in July were African American
13% reported a developmental disability
28% reported a mental illness
15-30% reported a substance use disorder
27% reported actively fleeing from domestic violence
66% had graduated from high school (9% also attended some college)

2017 POINT IN TIME COUNT

	JANUARY	JULY
Total Unaccompanied YYA	91	87
Unaccompanied YYA: Sheltered	80	79
Parenting and Pregnant YYA: Sheltered	20	18
Unaccompanied YYA: Unsheltered	11	8
Parenting and Pregnant YYA: Unsheltered	2	1

"For many of my kids, school is their safe place and their place of refuge. Students are moving—from home, to a shelter, to a friend's house, to grandma's house—and in this confusion, school and their teachers are the one consistency. This is so important for their development."

INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES

Experience in the foster care system has a strong correlation to experiencing homelessness as a youth or young adult. The Indiana Department of Child Services and the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) track housing instability among youth in foster care in Indiana.

According to 2015 data from the NYTD, by the time a child reaches age 17 in foster care, about 15% will have experienced homelessness. In Indiana, there were approximately 40,556 youth in the foster care system in 2017, of which 21% (8,570) resided in Marion County. Therefore, it can be estimated that approximately 1,286 of those youth will have at least one homeless episode by the age of 17. Additionally, 12% (1,028) of young adults may also experience homelessness at ages 18 or 19, and 21% (1,800) may experience it while at ages 20 or 21.

Inadequate housing remains a significant factor when considering placement into foster care. In 2017, approximately 14% (1,200) of youth were placed into foster care because their families were experiencing inadequate or unstable housing circumstances.

FOSTER CARE	% OF TOTAL FOSTER YOUTH	APPROXIMATE INDIANAPOLIS ANNUAL NUMBER
Foster youth who experience homelessness By age 17	15%	1,286
Prior foster youth who experience homelessness while ages 18-19	12%	1,028
Prior foster youth who experience homelessness while ages 20-21	21%	1,800
Children placed in foster system due to inadequate housing	14%	1,200

THE INFO

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS: DATA FOR YOUTH GRADES 8-12

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) collects data on students experiencing homelessness throughout the state, including Marion County-Indianapolis. In the 2015-2016 school year, there were 174,022 students in Marion County schools, of which IDOE identified a total of 4,793, or 3% of the total student population, who were experiencing homelessness. Of those, 1,831 students, or 38%, were in grades 8-12 with an average age range of 13-17; of this subset, 289 students, or 16%, were unaccompanied youth. Whenever possible, this report focuses on data collected from those unaccompanied youth. In some cases, however, IDOE was not able to provide data about this group, in which case information for the general youth experiencing homelessness in grades 8-12 was used.

The school system identified a much larger number (90% more) of unaccompanied minors than were reported in the HMIS, which collects information about the literally homeless. The data between HMIS and IDOE cannot be dedpulicated, but our efforts to assess the information show a very low duplication between unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness in HMIS and those in the IDOE system.

UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH: INDIANA VS INDIANAPOLIS

The number of unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness in Indianapolis is dramatically disproportionate to the rest of the state. Indianapolis accounts for 11% of the total youth experiencing homelessness reported through educational institutions in Indiana, but 31% of the total unaccompanied youth. This highlights the increasing need to serve unaccompanied minors in the Indianapolis area.

LIVING SITUATION

The school homeless liaisons collect data on housing status of these students, with the majority of them living in doubled up situations with parents or guardians. It's important to note our survey data also shows these youth often get reported as doubled up but experience multiple types of homelessness in a year, including literal homelessness. For instance, it was not uncommon for youth experiencing homelessness to stay in a doubled up situation, move to a shelter, sleep outside, and then return to a doubled up situation, yet remain classified as doubled up the entire time.

Doubled up	81%
Staying in shelters	9%
Staying in hotels/motels	7%
Unsheltered	3%

	BY PERCENT	BY NUMBER
Experiencing Homelessness with Parent or Guardian	84%	1,542
Experiencing Homelessness Unaccompanied	16%	289
TOTAL	100%	1,831

2015-2016 YOUTH REPORTED

INDIANA VS INDIANAPOLIS

	INDIANA (excluding Indianapolis)	INDIANAPOLIS
Experiencing Homelessness with Parent or Guardian	89%	69%
Experiencing Homelessness Unaccompanied	11%	31%

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Students experiencing homelessness face unique challenges related to school attendance and graduation rates. Not surprisingly, experience with unstable housing often forces students to become more mobile, shifting to motels, doubled up situations, and other forms of shelter. Research has proven that school attendance rate can dramatically affect a student's academic performance, but even more importantly, the likelihood of graduation. This highlights the importance of focusing on unaccompanied minors for housing stability and academic support.

Students experiencing homelessness are also more likely to be enrolled in special education programs than students who are housing stable. Our research found that approximately 14% of all Marion County students were enrolled in special education, while 17% of students experiencing homelessness took part in these programs. Additionally, students experiencing homelessness were less likely to pass standardized tests. When comparing standardized testing, like ISTEP scores, students who had stable housing were twice as likely to pass the English language arts section and four times more likely to pass the math section of the test.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

When considering disciplinary action within the schools, this study reviewed progressive patterns identified as in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, and expulsions. This data could not be collected specifically for unaccompanied minors, so students who had stable housing in grades 8-12 were compared to students experiencing homelessness in grades 8-12. As part of that comparison, the study found that students experiencing homelessness were 100% more likely to receive in-school suspension than housingsecure students and 122% more likely to receive out-of-school suspension. This is noteworthy, as the increased likelihood of suspension, especially outof-school suspension, leads to additional time away from academic environments and disengagement from the school system all together.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

	AVERAGE DAYS ABSENT	GRADUATION RATE
Housing-Stable	9	80%
Experiencing Homelessness with Parent or Guardian	17	78%
Experiencing Homelessness Unaccompanied	23	65%

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

	NON-HOMELESS	HOMELESS
In-school Suspension	3%	6%
Out-of-School Suspension	9%	20%
Expulsion	1%	1%

THE INFO

COMMUNITY-LEVEL FACTORS

One goal in this assessment was to differentiate factors that lead to homelessness versus traits of individuals experiencing homelessness—an important distinction. Throughout this process, we used a variety of data sources to consider community-level factors that lead youth and young adults into homelessness. These sources include the Point in Time counts, HMIS, feedback from homeless providers and school liaisons, surveys, and focus group data that considered the demographics, individual traits, and reported personal experiences of YYA.

Many of the data sources were not able to draw direct connections to homelessness, so focus group reports and survey written responses added depth and understanding to these findings. Direct connections into homelessness could be seen in those fleeing domestic violence or sex trafficking, LGBTQ YYA who experience family conflicts, YYA who lost employment, and those already experiencing housing instability in some form.

Issues that seem strongly connected to YYA ending up homeless, but in less direct ways, include transition out of the foster care system, being a YYA of color, and having one or more general health issues, such as a serious mental illness, substance use disorder, a physical disability, or a developmental disability. YYA often identified these mental or physical health issues as leading factors.

Some youth and young adults reported being kicked out of their homes, especially among the LGBTQ community. Among parenting YYA, many

LACK OF EMPLOYMENT AND DIFFICULTIES ATTAINING EMPLOYMENT WERE KEY FACTORS LEADING TO EVICTIONS AND INABILITY TO ATTAIN HOUSING.

40-50% of YYA report loss of a job or difficulty in getting employment as the main factor in being homeless. LGBTQ YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS OFTEN REPORT THAT FAMILIES HAVE BROKEN COMMUNICATION OFF COMPLETELY OR ASKED THEM TO LEAVE AFTER COMING OUT, LEADING TO HOUSING INSTABILITY AND HOMELESSNESS.

MORE THAN 1 IN 4 youth and young adults who experience homelessness identify as LGBTQ, and about **1 IN 10** identify as transgender.

YYA COMMONLY EXPERIENCE MULTIPLE TYPES OF HOMELESSNESS IN THE SAME YEAR, MAKING IT MORE DIFFICULT TO REGAIN STABILITY.

Of those doubled up, **MORE THAN HALF** of unaccompanied minors and **MORE THAN 30%** of young adults experience literal homelessness in the same year.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS A KEY FACTOR LEADING TO HOMELESSNESS AMONG YOUNG ADULTS AGES 18-24.

1 IN 4 young adults in total and **1 IN 2** young female adults become homeless due to fleeing domestic violence or sex trafficking. reported on the difficulty of finding affordable housing, quality childcare, and a living wage. Often, young families had been evicted previously and therefore had difficulty finding a landlord who would rent to them.

In looking at HMIS data, all intakes include a barrier assessment to help better identify key factors leading to homelessness. In this data set, the predominant factor among YYA is mental health issues (84%), while drug and alcohol addiction disorder (33%), experience in foster care (32%), and having a developmental disability (30%) also play major roles.

We know very little about the leading causes of homelessness from IDOE. However, our relationship with the McKinney-Vento liaisons allows us to gain anecdotal data. Collectively, they report that many families are evicted, parents may engage in drugs, or the family is fleeing domestic violence. In coordinating with our domestic violence providers, we were able to determine that 24% of total YYA experiencing homelessness and 49% of female YYA are homeless due to fleeing domestic violence situations.

YOUNG ADULTS WHO EXPERIENCE HOMELESSNESS OFTEN HAVE DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES, MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES, MEDICAL PROBLEMS, AND/OR SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS WHICH LEAD TO HOMELESSNESS AND MAKE HOUSING RECOVERY DIFFICULT.

- **1 in 3** have a reported mental health disorder
- **1 in 4** have a developmental disability
- 1 in 3 report substance use disorder
- **1 in 3** have a medical disability

FOSTER CARE EXPERIENCE HAS A STRONG CORRELATION WITH YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS.

HALF of minors and **AT LEAST 1 IN 4** young adults who experience homelessness have been in the foster care system, and many note fear of the foster care system as a key factor to avoiding housing options and other services.

SOME YYA EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS EXCHANGE SEX FOR TEMPORARY HOUSING BECAUSE THEY SEE NO OTHER OPTIONS.

5-7% of YYA actively exchange in survival sex for a place to stay for the night. Many more have done so over time, but do not maintain the activity.

YYA OF COLOR ARE DISPRO-PORTIONATELY HOMELESS.

- 2 in 3 YYA who experience homelessness are African American.
- **3 out of 4** are racial/ethnic minorities.

RE: TELLING THEIR STORIES

KAY

Kay became homeless at age 14 after a particularly bad fight with her mother. Scared that she would either harm herself or her mom, she packed a few pieces of clothing, walked to the nearest McDonalds, and waited more than eight hours for a friend to pick her up. She spent the entire afternoon planning her next step, because she knew, to avoid getting involved with Child Protective Services (CPS), she must plan her next move carefully. Kay ended up staying with her father, so she would not be considered missing or a runaway. His home was just the first of many in her journey of "bouncing" from place to place over the next three years.

Before she left home, Kay lived with her mother, older brother, younger sister, and her mother's boyfriend. For as long as she can remember, her family life was turbulent and unstable. Her mother was often verbally and physically abused, so Kay and her family would be forced to leave their home and take refuge in local shelters.

It was a complicated life, to say the least, but when her mother's boyfriend's son came to live in her home, Kay's life became unbearable. The son sexually molested her. This trauma, combined with the constant fighting and insecure housing situation, caused emotional issues that led to Kay's emergency inpatient treatment at a local stress center.

Within the last three years, Kay has been prescribed fourteen different medications, as well as mandatory group and private counseling to deal with post-traumatic stress. She feels she received little benefit from these programs and medications, except for one realization: "I realize, now, that suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem."

Kay is afraid of Child Protective Services (CPS) and foster care. "CPS owns you," she says. "They control what you do, separate you from your family and tell you who you will live with." Kay feels foster care is not actually better than couch surfing or doubling up. "If I am molested at home, I have my brother and sister to lean on, but in foster care, it would be worse because no one would care."

"BEING HOMELESS IS NOT FUN. YOU DON'T HAVE THE LUXURY OF BEING A KID."

"It is difficult not having a home," says Kay. She feels exploited for money wherever she goes; someone always wants something from her. Whether she lives with family or friends, Kay must pay "rent," which means—even at such a young age—she must hold down a steady job. Sometimes she's asked to hand over as much as \$100 a week for a place to stay, which usually doesn't include meals, so she frequently visits food pantries. Kay has bounced from so many different homes, it made it impossible to give her school counselor a home address. She never knew where she would be from one day to the next.

Though she struggles, Kay tries not to lose hopeno matter how hard it gets, she feels she still has something to offer and can be a blessing to others. Kay is now seventeen years old and proud that she is graduating early from a local charter school. She has hope for the future and intends to be a pharmacist. When asked what she wished for, Kay replied, "A small house, to live comfortably and to feel safe."

HELPING THE HELPERS

RE:SOURCE YYA SERVICE PROVIDERS

Just as YYA face barriers to accessing services, service providers face barriers in getting YYA the assistance and resources they need. In order to better understand the unique needs of these service providers, a survey was distributed to those who serve YYA experiencing homelessness. We then conducted a focus group to dig deeper into some of the issues identified through the survey. The survey was completed by 47 staff members working directly with YYA, and 11 people attended the focus group. Similar to other nonprofits, service providers

reported a lack of resources impacted their ability to serve YYA. Funding was reported as tight among most providers, especially those who wanted to develop new services.

Providers who serve YYA experiencing homelessness identified the need for additional programs and supports related to education and employment. Some providers focused on the effects of environmental circumstances: switching schools (30%), for instance, as a barrier for educational attainment, and transportation (64%) as key to

WHAT THE PROVIDERS SAY

OVERARCHING KEY BARRIERS

Mental health is a to be successful, yet to access mental health resources, and they are often turned

YYA often do not araduation or higher education as realistic

Basic needs (housing making it difficult to employment, or mental health care.

Emergency shelter options for youth and young adults are lacking in our community, often forcing them into adult systems where they experience greater trauma, including violence, substances, and often being preyed upon by adults.

There remains a lack of subsidized housing the lack of housing is at the heart of continued instability in many areas of their

support system and could benefit from transitional housing options for YYA with mental health, life supportive services.

Lack of transportation makes it difficult for YYA to engagement in employment and

often leads to drop

out or job loss.

instability.

YYA experience

high rates of

trauma due to housing

instability or

leading up to their housing

successful employment. Others identified key issues such as insufficient job training skills (51%), low literacy skills (55%), mental health barriers to regular attendance (57%), not being academically prepared (53%), and lack of adult mentorship (25%). Providers also noted that minors were often able to get academic and basic needs support from McKinney-Vento liaisons in K-12 programs, but similar support did not exist in colleges and universities. They also noted that for many YYA who grow up in low-income families, the families did not value high school graduation or higher education, so YYA often didn't understand the connection between education and securing employment. Capacity, too, was an issue for providers. While it was noted that relationship-building is critical to addressing barriers with YYA experiencing homelessness, the capacity to do so is limited.

Providers also noted that, just as YYA are unaware of services, service providers lack awareness as well. Lack of communication between providers results in clients that "double dip" or providers that "double handle" clients.

Service providers most frequently mentioned desire for more action. In terms of overall intervention in YYA homelessness, they felt Indianapolis had "remained steady" in its efforts, without improving-many issues that need to be addressed

WHAT THE PROVIDERS SAY

BARRIERS FOR UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

The survey and focus group also collected information on unique issues relate to unaccompanied minors. Providers noted these as top barriers.

Legal restrictions on leases or apartments 76% of providers said the biggest barrier was the legal inability of youth to sign leases or secure housing on their

older minors ages 16-17 who might otherwise be successful in this living situation Legal restrictions on obtaining identification documents such as birth certificates 70% of providers noted legal barriers to get documents like

birth certificates, state ID cards, driver's licenses, and other legal documents without a parental consent

Denial of services to minors and/or lack of space 59% of providers noted most homeless providers had policies or practices that prohibited them from serving youth, and that any program that would see them was often full or turned them away Fear of the foster care system

67% of providers noted youth often avoided services out of fear of being reported to the foster care system

Fear of family reunification 54% of providers noted that trying to force family reunification often led youth to avoid systems, as they do not feel reunification is desirable or realistic *"WE ARE TOO FULL. I NEED TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS, BUT WE SIMPLY DON'T HAVE THE TIME TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH ALL 300 PEOPLE IN OUR SHELTER. IF I AM A CASE WORKER WITH 40 CLIENTS, THERE ISN'T THE TIME NOR THE MONEY FOR IT. I MAY JUST MEET A CLIENT ONCE WHILE HE IS IN OUR SHELTER."*

have remained the same from year to year. "We are always asked to talk about homelessness... let's do something," one provider said. And when conversations do happen, they feel the wrong people are at the table: "top level leadership needs to be at the table and engaged. They are more likely to make change."

WHAT THE PROVIDERS SAY

SYSTEMIC ISSUES

There is a lack of organizational resources; all providers noted there was little opportunity to expand programs and services that youth and young adults need, because there was no community focus on bringing in resources specifically for YYA. Transportation continues to be a large resource need, and it was noted that other cities have free bus passes for homeless populations.

Youth and young adults are lost in the mix when they enter large programs. There's an inability to build relationships and serve YYA well.

There are no resources to help with prevention of homelessness.

There is a lack of a cohesive approach and communication between YYA providers everything feels very fragmented. The lack of community progress toward ending YYA homelessness makes providers wonder if collective efforts can be successful. Providers overwhelmingly noted that there seemed to be a lack of interest in YYA by the larger CoC and most homeless providers.

RE:CONSIDERING POLICY

As a component to this needs assessment, many barriers were identified which make it difficult for YYA experiencing homelessness to gain and maintain housing stability, some of which barriers include policy considerations. A national group called SchoolHouse Connection came to Indianapolis and helped identify policy issues that may remove some of the key barriers facing YYA with housing instability. A survey with homeless providers, feedback from YYA experiencing homelessness, a review of current Indiana law, and a review of laws in place in other states helped identify the following potential policy proposals:

POLICY PROPOSALS

Homeless Exemption For Foster Care Minor Reporting

Change the Department of Child Services reporting policy so that being an unaccompanied minor experiencing homelessness in itself is not sufficient to require a report. If additional dangerous factors exist, reporting requirements would still continue. This would allow youth experiencing homelessness to access shelter, transitional housing, and other services without parental consent and would not require providers to report them to Department of Child Services or to any law enforcement entity.

Examples: Wyoming HB 159, California 8652

Department of Education Annual Report

Department of Education must provide an annual report on students experiencing homelessness and a remediation plan to address student success.

Example: PASSED in 2018

Graduation Exemption Policy

Authorize McKinney Vento Liaisons or school social workers to allow youth who change school districts in the last 2 years of high school to obtain a diploma if they meet state minimum requirements (i.e. exempt them from districtspecific requirements that exceed state standards) and earn partial credits. This would address loss of credits and drop out rates that are due to housing instability.

Examples: California AB 1806, New Mexico HB 301, Oregon HB 3267, Texas SB 1494, Washington SB 5241

High School Equivalency Fee Waiver

Authorize McKinney-Vento Liaisons to provide a fee exemption to YYA experiencing homelessness for the High School Equivalency or General Education Diploma test.

Example: California SB252

Higher Education Homeless Liaisons

Establish a requirement for any postsecondary institution that receives federal or state funding to establish a single point of contact, or Homeless Liaison, who would connect with liaisons in K12 institutions to ease transition of YYA experiencing homelessness into higher education. Each institution would be required to report their single point of contact to Indiana Department of Education, and the Department of Education would be required to maintain a public listing for McKinney-Vento Liaisons and homeless service providers.

Examples: California AB 801, Louisiana HB 906

Easier Access to Legal Records and Identification

For minors experiencing homelessness, allow access to birth certificates and state IDs without parental consent and without fees.

For young adults experiencing homelessness, allow access to birth certificates and state IDs without fees.

Examples: California AB 1733, Tennessee HB 2303

Host Home Options

Allow host home programs to exist without the strict requirements of foster care homes.

Example: Washington SB2440

Easier Access To Mental Health, Substance Treatment, and Medical Care

Establish a process for youth to verify their eligibility under the statute (not dependent on a parent for support; living apart from parents; and managing their own affairs), such as letters from a liaison or service provider or a standard authorization form. (While current laws allow for minors 14 and older to access mental health, treatment, and medical care without parental consent, many are still turned away due to individual provider policies or ignorance. There is also ambiguity about whether minors must be emancipated in order to access these services. This proposed process would help eliminate these barriers.)

Medicaid Access for Unaccompanied Minors

Allow youth experiencing homelessness, identified by schools or homeless providers, to access Medicaid without parental consent. This is already allowed under federal law, but it is necessary to make this easier at the local level.

Air B&B Tax

Create a tax specifically on Air B&B to fund programming for YYA experiencing homelessness. Example: Illinois in 2016

WHILE MANY OF THESE LAWS MAY BE CONTROVERSIAL IN NATURE, INFORMATION FROM SURVEYS AND FOCUS AND ADVISORY GROUPS SUPPORT THE NEED FOR THIS REFORM. THEY ARE PROPOSED TO HELP YOUTH WITH HOUSING INSTABILITY GAIN THE SUPPORT THEY NEED.



WE ARE RE:SPONSIBLE

WE HAVE A VISION: to prevent and end YYA homelessness in Indianapolis, once and for all. But a vision is useless without a plan to back it up. The following is our plan, made up of five key steps that outline our goals and objectives, as well as the actions that need to be taken and the parties we need to hold accountable to ensure success.

1: OPTIMIZE

Optimize the crisis response system to reduce the length of time that YYA spend homeless

2: INCREASE

Increase availability and access to safe, supportive, and permanent housing for all YYA experiencing housing instability

3: EXPAND

Expand and enhance wraparound services and coordinated approaches to increase housing stability and prevent return to homelessness

4: ENGAGE

Engage intersecting systems in a shared approach to prevent YYA from being released into homelessness

5: EMPOWER

Empower leadership entities to align resources, enable collaboration, and maintain transparency with the community in order to prevent and end YYA homelessness

1: OPTIMIZE

Optimize the crisis response system to reduce the length of time that YYA spend homeless

MAKING IT HAPPEN

KEY OBJECTIVES

- Complete census of all YYA experiencing homelessness
- No unaccompanied, unsheltered YYA
- 45% of all YYA diverted to safe, permanent housing options

IDENTIFY ALL UNACCOMPANIED YYA WHO LACK REGULAR, FIXED, AND ADEQUATE HOUSING

- Establish criteria to create the census, including defining all YYA to be included and determining data collection strategies
- Establish data collection protocols and data storage options
- Develop a method to create a "by name" list for YYA

ESTABLISH PREVENTION STRATEGIES THAT KEEP UNSTABLY-HOUSED YYA FROM BECOMING HOMELESS

- Create community priorities for YYA prevention programming, focusing on education for youth and employment for young adults
- Map existing prevention services and determine effective ways to integrate them into the Coordinated Entry System
- Establish effective evaluation strategies for prevention programs

IMPLEMENT DIVERSION STRATEGIES THAT CONNECT YYA TO PERMANENT HOUSING OPTIONS WHENEVER POSSIBLE

- Secure resources to pilot YYA diversion
- Establish entry points and integration with family diversion

PROVIDE LOW-BARRIER CRISIS HOUSING AND SERVICES TO YYA WHO WANT THEM AND CANNOT BE DIVERTED

- Create YYA-specific program standards that require all YYA crisis housing to be low-barrier and Housing First
- Establish technical assistance and training for all YYA crisis housing
- Recruit providers who will establish YYA-specific crisis housing

USE A YYA-FOCUSED COORDINATED ENTRY PROCESS TO CONNECT YYA TO HOUSING AND NEEDED SERVICES

- Create a multi-agency crisis response team of navigators to connect YYA to housing
- Create a virtual hub where YYA have immediate access to community resources
- Establish prioritization for YYA homelessness and prevention
- Create regular case conferencing to ensure YYA are connected to resources
- Expand Coordinated Entry System (CES) access points to additional locations where YYA are likely to be
- Create CES policies and strategies to include doubled-up youth and all McKinney-Vento unaccompanied youth
- Determine the key non-housing programs to include in YYA CES (with a focus on employment, education, and income growth opportunities)

ESTABLISH HOST HOME PROGRAMS AS ALTERNATIVES TO CRISIS RESPONSE HOUSING

- Create program guidelines for host home programs
- Recruit agencies to manage host home programs

2: INCREASE

Increase availability and access to safe, supportive, and permanent housing for all YYA experiencing housing instability

MAKING IT HAPPEN

KEY OBJECTIVES

- 225 non-time-limited supportive housing subsidies and 480 rapid re-housing subsidies secured and available each year
- All YYA housed within 30 days of identification

CREATE A PIPELINE OF HOUSING OPTIONS THAT ARE APPEALING TO YYA

- Engage developers and landlords that are willing to help find or create YYA-focused housing
- Utilize the risk mitigation fund to recruit landlords willing to house YYA
- Advocate for Indiana Housing & Community Development Authority (IHCDA) to offer another round of tax credits for YYA-focused projects through the Permanent Supportive Housing Institute
- Advocate for the City of Indianapolis to offer tenant-based rental assistance (TBRA) targeting the hardest to serve YYA

CREATE SCATTERED-SITE OPTIONS THAT ALLOW FOR GREATER CHOICE AMONG YYA

- Recruit at least two additional providers who are willing to manage rapid re-housing projects
- Apply and secure Family Unification Program (FUP) Vouchers in collaboration with Indianapolis Housing Agency (IHA) and Indiana Department of Child Services (IDCS)
- Secure a YYA preference through CES for IHA vouchers

Ensure adequate housing options exist for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking

- Work with domestic violence providers to create more programming and housing options for YYA
- Establish relationships with human trafficking programs, and ensure housing options

QUICKLY MOVE YYA INTO PERMANENT HOUSING OR NON-TIME-LIMITED HOUSING BASED ON HOUSING FIRST, CLIENT CHOICE, AND TRAUMA INFORMED CARE

- Establish a project recruitment and selection process for new housing projects
- Submit a competitive Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program application

3: EXPAND

Expand and enhance wraparound services and coordinated approaches to increase housing stability and prevent return to homelessness

MAKING IT HAPPEN

KEY OBJECTIVES

- 90% of formerly homeless YYA remain housed for at least two years
- Increased treatment for YYA with reported mental health or substance abuse disorders
- Increased number of YYA with access to health insurance
- YYA maintain or increase their earned income each year

PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES THAT EFFECTIVELY LINK YYA TO MENTAL HEALTH AND MEDICAL CARE

- Customize the community program standards for YYA, and work to measure fidelity and outcomes
- Offer family engagement services that lead to reunification whenever possible
- Develop community evaluation criteria for services to YYA housing projects
- Provide ongoing training and technical assistance to encourage youth providers to integrate Housing First, Trauma Informed Care, and Positive Youth Development

PRIORITIZE ACCESS TO EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, CERTIFICATION OPPORTUNITIES, AND JOB PLACEMENT

- Implement housing programs for unaccompanied minors that increase school stability and graduation rates
- Engage community mental health centers to increase clinical case management and access to mental health services
- Advocate for YYA treatment options focused on combatting the opioid epidemic

ESTABLISH SYSTEMIC SERVICE DELIVERY OPTIONS WITH DESIGNATED SYSTEM LEADS

- Define the needed system lead roles
- Create clear roles, responsibilities, and implementation plans

4: ENGAGE

Engage intersecting systems in a shared approach to prevent YYA from being released into homelessness

MAKING IT HAPPEN

KEY OBJECTIVES

- Establish inter-system data sharing and coordinated entry options
- 90% graduation rate among McKinney-Vento minors
- Establish housing plan for 100% of youth aging out of foster care
- 100% of youth exiting juvenile justice programs into unstable housing are entered into coordinated entry system

MAINTAIN EFFECTIVE DATA SHARING AND INTEGRATION BETWEEN COC, MCKINNEY-VENTO LIAISONS, FOSTER CARE, AND JUVENILE JUSTICE

- Create an integrated discharge process between CES, IDCS, and juvenile justice programs in order to keep YYA from entering homelessness
- Create data safety protocols for data sharing and storage for all shared data

ENSURE THAT ALL UNACCOMPANIED MINORS IN MCKINNEY-VENTO PROGRAMS HAVE STABLE HOUSING AND GRADUATE ON TIME

- Build program bridges for graduating McKinney-Vento youth to postsecondary education opportunities
- Develop methods for all unaccompanied minors engaged with McKinney-Vento liaisons to be entered into CES

ESTABLISH AN INTEGRATED COORDINATED ENTRY HYBRID PROCESS WITH IDOE, IDCS, JUVENILE JUSTICE PROGRAMS, AND IUPUI

- Develop crisis housing options for YYA who are housing unstable and enrolled in local university programs
- Ensure all pre-release corrections programs for YYA connect ex-offenders to housing and wraparound supports, and CES when necessary
- Ensure all youth aging out of foster care programs are connected to housing and services
- Ensure an effective referral process for all former foster care young adults ages 18-21 to be connected to extended foster care housing and services
- Advocate to increase extended foster care to age 25

5: EMPOWER

Empower leadership entities to align resources, enable collaboration, and maintain transparency with the community in order to prevent and end YYA homelessness

MAKING IT HAPPEN

KEY OBJECTIVES

- Successfully meet the USICH Criteria and Benchmarks to End Youth Homelessness
- Increased resources for YYA to receive permanent housing

DEVELOP STRUCTURED OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ALL YYA STAKEHOLDERS

- Develop a YYA advisory board that includes leadership representatives from all intersecting systems to keep them updated and engaged in homelessness solutions
- Develop memorandums of understanding that clearly define roles for all stakeholders

ENSURE AUTHENTIC YYA VOICE IN ALL ASPECTS OF IMPLEMENTING THE COORDINATED COMMUNITY PLAN

- Support development and engagement of the Youth Action Board
- Integrate YYA voice into all YYA project selections

MAINTAIN UPDATED NEEDS DATA ON YYA EXPERIENCING HOUSING INSTABILITY

- Conduct an annual YYA Point-in-Time Count
- Ensure all YYA housing providers are utilizing coordinated entry and HMIS whenever possible
- Collect data from other systems and non-HMIS sources about YYA who are at risk for or experiencing homelessness
- Monitor YYA projects quarterly to ensure community-level minimums meet system performance measures

DEVELOP ONGOING RELATIONSHIPS WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND ELECTED OFFICIALS THAT CREATE STRONGER COLLABORATIONS AND SECURE OR POOL RESOURCES

- Maintain a policy agenda that supports success and reduces barriers for YYA experiencing homelessness
- Conduct annual policy awareness and planning for YYA

A SYSTEM THAT LASTS

CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Indianapolis CoC will establish a Continuous Quality Improvement Plan to ensure ongoing efforts around YYA homelessness are functioning effectively and are enhanced as needed. The Homeless Youth Taskforce and the Youth Action Board will lead efforts to evaluate direct service and systemic strategies like coordinated entry, effectiveness and quickness of housing, capacity needs of providers, representation of genuine YYA voice, needed revisions to the plan, and ongoing partner engagement. This will keep the plan organic and responsive to evolving needs and will help ensure YYA have access to the system.

PROCESS ASSESSMENT

PLAN TO PREVENT AND END YYA HOMELESSNESS – SUCCESS TOWARD GOALS

ACTIVITY – Review goals and successful progress toward goals quarterly. Complete written annual progress report for governing board and community.

GOAL – Ensure accountability to the system. Make updates and changes to the plan as needed.

COORDINATED ENTRY SYSTEM – EFFECTIVELY MOVE YYA TO HOUSING

ACTIVITY – Annually conduct an assessment that includes direct feedback from YYA and providers about the effectiveness and cultural sensitivity to YYA. Include anonymous surveys and external evaluator.

GOAL – Make changes to coordinated entry to improve access.

SYSTEM INTEGRATION PARTNERSHIP REVIEW

ACTIVITY – Assess the effectiveness of intersystem efforts with foster care, juvenile justice, and educational institutions.

GOAL – Improve communication, service integration, and shared outcomes.

CRISIS RESPONSE

ACTIVITY – Assess whether crisis response housing meets needs of YYA who are literally or imminently homeless.

GOAL – Determine capacity of existing providers to meet the emerging needs of YYA that enter the system. Seek process improvement or additional resources as needed.

HOUSING GAP ANALYSIS

ACTIVITY – Annually update system modeling for housing stock and subsidies.

GOAL – Maintain a current and up-to-date analysis of housing needs of YYA. Advocate for increased stock from multiple resources.

SERVICE FIDELITY EVALUATION

ACTIVITY – Review community-written program standards and evaluate current programs against established supportive services outcomes.

GOAL – Provide technical assistance and training to providers who need help. Identify resource needs for supportive services.

SYSTEM LEVEL EVALUATION

ACTIVITY – Review process and collaboration effectiveness across entire YYA system.

GOAL – Develop a set of process improvement recommendations from external evaluator.



NYA HOMELESSNESS IN INDIANAPOLIS



IT TAKES A VILLAGE

THE YYA SYSTEM

After reviewing data from the needs assessment, input from YYA who are experiencing or have experienced homelessness, and information about best practices and other YYA homelessness programs, the Indianapolis Homeless Youth Taskforce and Youth Action Board developed the YYA System. This system is targeted to serve youth, individual young adults, and pregnant and parenting young adults experiencing any aspect of homelessness in Indianapolis.

The Homeless Youth Taskforce and the Youth Action Board will oversee the implementation of the YYA System, including advocating for new resources, collaborating with community partners (such as IDCS, school districts, and juvenile justice organizations), and determining project requirements and proposal scoring as funding becomes available. Metrics for system process and performance evaluation will be developed and reviewed regularly.

The Homeless Youth Taskforce and the Youth Action Board are committed to a continuous quality improvement process that plans, tests, and adjusts elements of the system to reach the community's goal of YYA homelessness being rare, short-lived, and recoverable. We commit to provide YYA opportunities for education, employment, mental and physical healthcare, and meaningful connections to family, friends, and community.

THE NEEDS OF SPECIFIC SUBPOPULATIONS WERE CONSIDERED WHEN DESIGNING THE SYSTEM:

- Youth (minors under age 18)
- LGBTQ YYA
- YYA with special needs or disabilities
- Pregnant or parenting young adults
- YYA of color
- YYA experiencing chronic homelessness
- Former foster YYA
- Victims of trafficking or domestic violence
- YYA engaged or formerly engaged with the juvenile justice system

IT TAKES VALUES

The Homeless Youth Taskforce and Youth Action Board adopted the following values as essential to the overall system and the different interventions in the system:

POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Positive Youth Development is a framework that focuses on identifying and developing young people's resiliencies and assets, rather than concentrating on their risks and deficits.

TRAUMA INFORMED CARE

Trauma Informed Care includes realizing the widespread impact of trauma, as well as recognizing the signs and symptoms, and responding by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices.

HOUSING FIRST

Systems and programs that embrace a Housing First philosophy ensure people experiencing homelessness are connected to permanent housing swiftly with few to no preconditions, contingencies, or other barriers based on a desired behavior, treatment, or outcome.

YOUTH CHOICE

Youth Choice relates to YYA's active participation in decisions about their present and future circumstances and encompasses YYA participation in decision-making about program and systemlevel policies and practices

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Family Engagement is a philosophy wherein providers work to build trust with parents/family members of YYA experiencing homelessness and overcome barriers to their involvement. At the same time, providers support Youth Choice by offering options for whether, when, how, and to what extent to engage their families.

INCLUSIVITY & CULTURAL COMPETENCY

Inclusivity and Cultural Competency refers to the ability to effectively provide care for people with diverse characteristics and perspectives.

INDIVIDUALIZED SUPPORTS

Each YYA experiencing housing instability has unique needs that must be addressed. As such, programs are best designed to focus on individual needs rather than one structured curriculum or program pathway.

SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

The philosophy of Social and Community Integration should run through all programming for YYA experiencing homelessness and supports the goal of successfully transitioning the YYA into adulthood, including integration into a community as a positive, contributing member.

COORDINATED ENTRY INTEGRATION

Coordinated Entry Integration provides a structured process for diversion, entry, assessment, scoring, prioritization, eligibility determination, and referral for housing and services.

"I'VE MADE POOR DECISIONS. Poor decisions in the past should be met with consequences, not death sentences. At a minimum, everyone deserves to be warm and have food."

INDIANAPOLIS COORDINATED COMMUNITY APPROACH TO YYA HOMELESSNESS

To ensure every aspect of the community's approach to YYA homelessness is addressed, the Homeless Youth Taskforce and the Youth Action Board identified four phases of the YYA System:

1: IDENTIFICATION
2: ENGAGEMENT
3: CRISIS RESPONSE
4: PERMANENT HOUSING 1865

1: IDENTIFICATION

The goal of the Identification phase is to ensure all YYA experiencing a housing crisis, including those who are victims of trafficking, domestic violence, or other forms of violence or abuse, are known to the community. Once identified, their immediate safety needs can be determined and steps can be taken to secure the assistance needed to resolve their housing crisis and reach other goals.

The Homeless Youth Taskforce and the Youth Action Board will design a process to help community systems and organizations identify YYA experiencing a housing crisis and, using standardized procedures, engage them with the resources available in the YYA System. Through a community education and mobilization campaign, the community—including YYA—will be made aware of the resources available to youth and young adults in a housing crisis and will be able to reach out for assistance. The steps involved in the Identification phase are as follows:

ESTABLISH HOMELESS YYA IDENTIFICATION POINTS IN THE COMMUNITY, SYSTEMS, AND ORGANIZATIONS IN CONTACT WITH YYA EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

- Schools and universities
- Department of Child Services
- Hospitals
- 211
- Juvenile Justice
- Community partners, such as WorkOne centers
- Social services providers, such as mental health agencies
- Police
- Libraries
- Emergency shelters
- Day Centers/Drop-In
- Street Outreach
- Youth self-identification

YOUTH SELF IDENTIFICATION





- IDENTIFICATION POINTS
 - Schools
 - Dept. of Child Services
 - Hospitals
 - 211
 - Juvenile Justice
 - Community Partners
- Social Service
 - Providers
- Police
- Libraries
- Emergency Shelters
- Day Center/Drop-in
- Street Outreach

2: ENGAGEMENT

Once YYA in a housing crisis are identified, referrals to appropriate resources can be made through a new Virtual Resource Hub. In addition, YYA will immediately be connected to a Multi-Agency Crisis Response Team/Navigators to help determine where they can safely stay that evening and to plan for permanent housing and other goals.

VIRTUAL RESOURCE HUB

- Smart interface and algorithms to guide referrals by YYA's situation and choice
- Resources include shelter, housing, healthcare, mental health, education, employment, basic needs, and benefits
- Used by providers who identify YYA to connect them to available resources
- Can also be used by YYA to search for resources without having to reveal their current housing situation

MULTI-AGENCY CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM/ NAVIGATORS

- Represent different systems, including IDCS, education, homeless, and mental health
- Accessed through Virtual Resource Hub or by identifying systems or organizations
- Acts as coordinated entry access point and has access to diversion resources to help YYA find a safe place to spend the night (in their network of family and friends if possible, or an emergency shelter if no alternative safe place to stay is identified)
- Immediate, mobile response with resources to solve logistics issues such as transportation and basic needs

COORDINATED ENTRY THROUGH SHELTERS, DROP-IN CENTERS, STREET OUTREACH

- Act as resource points where YYA can access basic needs and coordinated entry
- Initial coordinated entry with focus on diverting YYA from entering shelters by helping them find a safe place to spend the night (in their network of family and friends if possible, or an emergency shelter if no alternative safe place to stay is identified)



COORDINATED ENTRY PROCESS

3: CRISIS RESPONSE

The goal of the YYA system is to ensure any YYA in a housing crisis has an immediate safe place to sleep, whether it is in the home of a family or friend or in one of the programs in the homeless system. Components of the Crisis Response phase include:

DIVERSION SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE

- Support, referrals, and financial assistance provided to YYA in a temporary or permanent housing situation, usually with family or friends
- May involve mediation, conflict resolution, housing planning, and/or referral to community resources
- Limited financial assistance provided, in some cases, to help family or friend bear the cost of YYA's stay

SHELTERS, HOST HOMES, TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

- All programs operated with the values adopted by the Homeless Youth Taskforce and the Youth Action Board
- Basic shelter, food, hygiene, and other needs met with coordinated entry support to develop a permanent housing plan
- Services from mainstream systems accessed as needed, including education, employment, healthcare, mental health, and benefits

DIVERSION SERVICES & ASSISTANCE



CRISIS & SHORT-TERM HOUSING

- Host Homes
 (Aspirational)
- Shelter (Existing)
- Transitional Housing (Existing)

Here to





4: PERMANENT HOUSING

The goal of the YYA System is rapid exit to permanent housing with follow-up services and support to achieve other goals, such as earning a certificate or diploma, achieving employment, improving and maintaining health, and connecting to community of the YYA's choice. Components of the Permanent Housing phase include:

FAMILY AND FRIENDS, RAPID RE-HOUSING, NON-TIME-LIMITED SUPPORTIVE HOUSING, AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- Stable, safe housing where YYA have choice
- Services provided by housing program, including follow-up services after YYA exit assistance, if appropriate
- Stand-alone, follow-up services provided in housing outside the homeless system to help YYA stabilize and connect to supports in the community
- · Geographic diversity; locations near resources

MAINSTREAM SERVICES

- YYA connected to community resources for employment, education, financial education, healthcare, mental health, and benefits
- Educate mainstream services about needs of YYA experiencing homelessness and to streamline access to resources; particular areas of focus will include easing transition from child mental health system to adult mental health system

OTHER COMMUNITY HOUSING

- Some YYA will be eligible for housing based on their previous situation (e.g. former foster care youth are eligible for housing and services through IDCS); the YYA System will develop screening and referral processes to these resources if a YYA choses to access them
- Young adults experiencing homelessness who are attending college or other programs need housing support to continue their studies; yearround university housing and other housing assistance programs can divert these

OTHER COMMUNITY HOUSING

- University Housing (Aspirational)
- Post-System Housing (Existing)



- (Existing)
 Employment
- Education
 Health Care
 Help



PERMANENT HOUSING W/ FOLLOW-UP SERVICES

- Permanent Family & Friends (Existing)
- Rapid Re-housing (Development)
- Non-time Limited Supportive Housing (Development)
 Affordable Housina

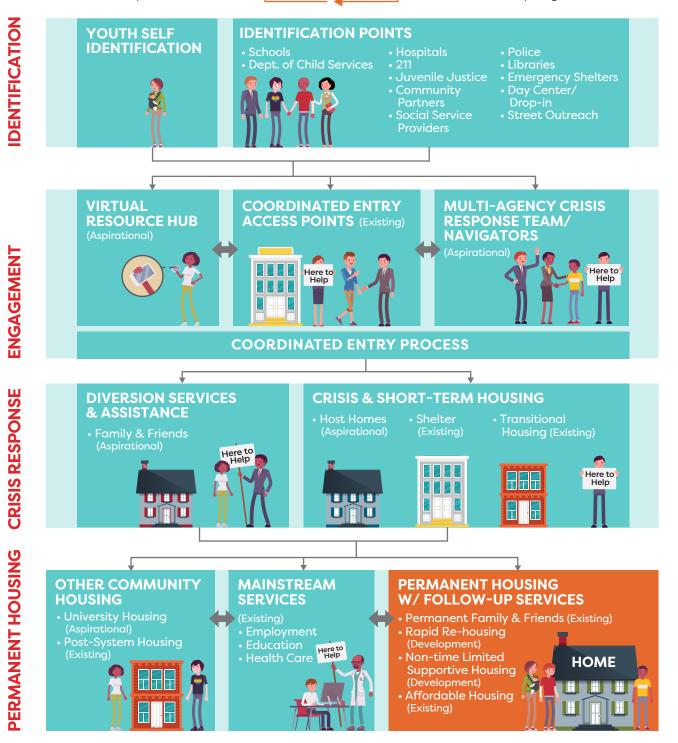
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INDIANAPOLIS YOUTH HOMELESSNESS COORDINATED COMMUNITY APPROACH

PRIORITY POPULATIONS

- Minors
- LGBTQ youth
- · Youth with special needs or disabilities
- Pregnant or parenting youth
- Youth of color
- Chronically homeless youth
- Former foster youth
- Victims of trafficking or domestic violence
- Justice involved youth
- Youth Taskforce and Youth Action Board plan, implement, oversee and evaluate youth system on federal and local outcomes.
- SYSTEM AND INTERVENTIONS VALUES
- Positive Youth Development
- Trauma Informed Care
- Housing First
- Family Engagement
- Youth Choice
- Inclusivity & Cultural Competency
- Individualized Supports
- Social and Community Integration
- Coordinated Entry Integration



This plan is the result of a collaborative community effort by organizations who brought their experience, expertise, and passion to help find solutions to YYA experiencing homelessness. We would like to acknowledge and thank the following organizations who served on our Planning Team:

RE:COGNITION

- Adult & Child Health
- Children's Bureau
- Community Health Network
- Department of Child Services
- Indiana Youth Group
- Job Corps
- McKinney-Vento Liaisons
- Midtown Mental Health
- Outreach Inc.
- Stopover, Inc.
- Youth Action Board

OUR HEARTFELT **RESPECT** AND APPRECIATION TO:

Abt Associates IU Public Policy Institute Schoolhouse Connection United Way of Central Indiana



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