KEYS TO A FUTURE WITHOUT YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Cincinnati/Hamilton County, Ohio
Plan to End Youth Homelessness

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Abstract

Innovations are the foundation of our plan as we shift from multiple programs that serve youth to a data-driven system with a common vision and shared goals.

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LIGHTHOUSE
Youth & Family Services

STRATEGIES TO
END HOMELESSNESS

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> *I will know I'm home when the tables are turned.*
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> *I will know I'm home when my name is on a lease.*
> *I will know I'm home when I can be comfortable and be myself.*
> *I will know I'm home when I can finally call a place my home.*
>
> *-Anonymous, Lighthouse Youth Advisory Council*

Our shared vision for every young person in Cincinnati/Hamilton County, Ohio is that they can "be comfortable and be myself… and finally call a place my home." This document is being submitted as evidence of Hamilton County, Ohio's continued progress in creating a comprehensive plan to end youth homelessness by 2020 as part of the HUD Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project. Partner organizations, Strategies to End Homelessness (STEH) and Lighthouse Youth and Family Services (Lighthouse) led the development of the plan with the Lighthouse Youth Advisory Council and Hamilton County Job and Family Services (child welfare).

Since late March 2017, the leadership team has met weekly and the strategic planning committee has met biweekly. Youth with lived experience of homelessness have participated on the leadership and strategic planning committees, in conversations on targeted topics and in focus groups. In total, young people have contributed over 200 hours to this planning process. Stakeholders and committee members have contributed over 650 hours to the plan's development. The following articulates our vision, goals, objectives, and success measures, as well as potential projects.

This final plan will become a road map to the work we must do in order to end youth homelessness. Continuous feedback from the public, the Youth Advisory Council, and HUD will be shared with our CoC Youth Workgroup (formerly known as the YHDP Strategic Planning Committee) and will be incorporated into Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) efforts during Implementation.

Ending youth homelessness is not an easy task but it is possible. KEYS represents the wealth of knowledge and passion that exists in our community as well as the commitment to creating a system that ensures that all young people have access to safe, affordable, and stable housing. Thank you to the community partners who helped bring KEYS to life. And thank you to the Youth Advisory Council members for redefining who the experts are in our community – this plan is dedicated to you!

*For more information on KEYS please contact Meredith Hicks and Jen Best. Their contact information and a full list of KEYS community partners are included in the Appendix starting on page A4.

Executive Summary

In 2010, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) presented *Opening Doors: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness* to the President and Congress, identifying youth as one of four special populations and articulating a goal of preventing and ending youth homelessness by 2020. The plan is based on the vision that no one should be without a safe, stable place to call home.

Hamilton County, Ohio is one of ten communities in the country selected to participate in the *Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project (YHDP)*, led by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This initiative consists of developing and implementing a plan for youth homelessness prevention and intervention.

The overarching community goal in Cincinnati and Hamilton County is to make youth homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring. Specific Community Goals include:

1. Prevent homelessness before it occurs.
2. Provide safe and appropriate shelter to all willing youth who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness.
3. Reduce the length of homeless episodes experienced by youth.
4. Ensure that youth exiting the homeless system have the supports they need to remain housed.
5. Encourage innovation, system change and sustainability within the CoC and larger community.

We will measure the success of our initiative by tracking system level changes[1] including:
- Reducing the percentage of youth who become homeless by over 50% by 2020 (825 unduplicated youth to 400 unduplicated youth)
- Reducing the percentage of youth who return to homelessness within 2 years after exiting from housing and/or shelter programs to permanent destinations from 24% to 10% by 2020.
- Reducing the average length of homeless episodes from 38 days to 21 days by 2020.
- Increasing the percentage of youth who exit shelter and become permanently housed (during the operating year) from 65.4% to 80% by 2020.

Innovations

Several innovations lay the foundation for our community plan to end youth homelessness. A by-name list will track the presence and progress of every homeless youth in Hamilton County's Continuum of Care. The Youth Dedicated Services Team will provide a single point of contact to accompany the youth through the system, connecting them to the level of care they need, and supporting them throughout their entire experience, including aftercare, following a reduction in system supports. This team will serve all 18-24-year-old clients in the system and will meet regularly to discuss progress made by each. For our community, this marks a huge shift from multiple programs that serve youth, to one group with shared goals and expertise about the youth being served.

Consistent data collection and tracking towards outcome goals, informed by community reflection and input, is our approach to process improvement and CoC management. This will continue to facilitate an unprecedented level of impact, change, and accountability about the accessibility and function of our systems and processes.

An examination of our current housing programs revealed the need for an innovative structure to increase housing options to better match the needs of youth. The Progressive Engagement Housing Model will include one "pot of funding" that can be used for a variety of housing types, better matching the housing needs of youth in real-time, rather than compelling youth placement in an available bed that may not be best suit to their needs or desires. This will also allow us to gather data on appropriate housing types, which has been a historical limitation of our

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[1] HMIS data accessed in June 2017

community's data collection and analysis processes. Additionally, Housing Navigators will actively recruit and support landlords who will rent to youth, strengthening relationships so that the landlord and youth can better overcome any challenges or misunderstandings, and keeping the youth housed.

Finally, a policy agenda, formed with support from diverse community agencies, will be a first for Cincinnati/Hamilton County, and will aid in homelessness prevention and decreasing recidivism by removing barriers for homeless youth to access community resources.

Section I. Youth Homelessness in Cincinnati/Hamilton County, OH

Youth Homelessness Is a Challenge in Hamilton County

Defining homelessness for this initiative was a challenge as agencies operate with different definitions. For this initiative, we used a broader definition of **"homeless"** or **"homelessness,"** but specific projects may indicate a narrower definition as determined by funding source. The broad definition is defined as a person who experiences one or more of the following:

1. Literally Homeless - Sleeping in an emergency shelter, on the street or in a place not generally meant for sleeping (cars, abandoned buildings, etc.)
2. Fleeing domestic violence
3. Doubled up or couch-surfing—relying on others for a place to stay
4. Unstably housed—as evidenced by many moves in a short period of time

Statement of Need: Our Community Assessment

In the following statistics, each system used their own definition of homelessness, which creates some discrepancy in the numbers. No matter how it's measured, the information clearly demonstrates that youth homelessness deserves attention in Hamilton County.

In 2016, HMIS data indicates there were 7,169 unduplicated homeless individuals in Cincinnati and Hamilton County, which constitutes the unduplicated count of homeless persons engaged through street outreach and emergency shelters. Included in that group are 825 unaccompanied homeless youths between the ages of 18 and 24. Overall, this group represents 11.5% of the homeless population. Cincinnati Public Schools reported that in the 2015-2016 school year, there were 2,438 students who were classified as homeless, of whom 884 were unaccompanied. Most of these youth were couch surfing or living in shelters.

Many youth who experience homelessness or who are at risk of homelessness come into contact with Hamilton County's public systems, such as Hamilton County Job and Family Services (HCJFS) agency, Hamilton County Juvenile Court, Hamilton County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board, and for those youth over the age of 17, the adult criminal justice system at some point. These systems have a responsibility to help prepare youth for a successful life post-emancipation or custody; if they don't, this systemic failure produces personal costs for the youth, and economic costs for our community.

Each year in Hamilton County, approximately 108 youth ages 18 - 24 age out of the Child Welfare System.[2] By age 24, approximately 25% of former foster youth have experienced homelessness for a period of time. Between 2008 and 2015, emancipated youth experienced an estimated 1,088 episodes of homelessness. The county estimates

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[2] Economic Analysis of Hamilton County's Emancipated Youth Research Report, 2017. Analysis conducted by the University of Cincinnati Economics Center

costs of $582,000 for shelter accommodations, with an average length of stay of approximately 24 days. Estimated costs for the physical and mental health for emancipated youth were $7,633,000 annually. The county uses funds from the Children's Services and Mental Health tax levies to help cover costs incurred for foster youth health care.

The longer a young person remains in the care of the child welfare system, the less likely it becomes that the child will be reconciled with his or her natural family or find permanency with another family. As we consider the youth in the child welfare system who are at greatest risk of homelessness, we narrow our focus to encompass those youth who enter the child welfare system at the age of 14 or older and those who age out of care without reconciliation with their biological families or adoption. As of July 7, 2017, there were 551 youth aged 14-22 years in HCJFS custody. 170 (30.9%) have been in their current custody episode for at least 2 years[3]. Hamilton County Job and Family Services reports that in 2016, 94 youth aged out of the Hamilton County Children's Services system[4].

In 2016, Hamilton County Juvenile Court served 4,078 unique youth in 8,602 delinquency and unruly complaints; it is likely that a significant portion of these youth have experienced or are at risk of homelessness. The intersections between juvenile justice and homelessness are many and reinforcing. For example, homelessness can lead to juvenile justice involvement through the pathways of truancy, traumatic stress and aggression, survival motivated theft and sexual activity, and trespassing; juvenile justice involvement may also further exacerbate or destabilize youth living situations.

National data suggests that nearly half of homeless youth have had juvenile justice involvement. Obtaining accurate local numbers is more difficult, as data on the intersection of homelessness and juvenile justice involvement is not publicly available; this is further complicated by the fact that youth 18-24 (and some youth under the age of 18) are involved with the adult criminal justice system.

While we don't have an exact count of the number of homeless youth involved in the Hamilton County justice system, a one-time data linkage between Lighthouse and Juvenile Court indicates that justice involvement is likely to be common among homeless youth in the county. The project matched Juvenile Court delinquency/unruly adjudicated cases with 6,300 Lighthouse clients aged 11 – 18 served between June 2010 and June 2014. Of these 6,300 clients, 4,318 unique parties were matched with Juvenile Court cases; 59.77% of these clients were designated as homeless according the HUD definition of homelessness, and 75.36% of the homeless Juvenile Court involved youth were African American.

In Hamilton County, an estimated 15% of clients at the Lighthouse Sheakley Center for Youth, an emergency shelter specifically for young adults ages 18 to 24, self-identify as LGBTQ. This percentage is based on HMIS data collected during intake. Numbers stemming from self-report measures are likely to be an undercount, because some young people who ask for help will not disclose such personal information and, based on past experience, other homeless LGBTQ youth are reluctant to seek services at all.

In 2016, the YWCA Domestic Violence Shelter served 563 individuals, of which 53 (~10%) were ages 18-24. Of these 53 youth, 23 (43%) were parenting/or pregnant[5]. The Domestic Violence shelter also partners with the

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[3] State Automated Child Welfare Information System Data, accessed July 7, 2017.
[4] Public Children's Services Association of Ohio Factbook 13th Edition 2017. Accessed on July 7, 2017.
http://www.pcsao.org/pdf/factbook/2017/Hamilton.pdf
[5] YWCA data, accessed in May 2017.

Salvation Army to provide safe shelter to victims of human trafficking who are in need of a confidential shelter location. Most data on human trafficking is not maintained in HMIS, but the local Salvation Army reports that more than 400 human trafficking survivors were served through their outreach, drop-in and group services. Salvation Army reports that age data on their trafficking clients is not always tracked but the majority of clients present as in their 20's.

Unaccompanied Minors – According to Cincinnati Public Schools, in the 2015-2016 school year, 2,438 students were classified as homeless. 884 of these students were unaccompanied, the majority of whom were couch surfing or living in shelters. The Lighthouse Youth Crisis Center, an emergency shelter serving unaccompanied youth between the ages of 11-17, served 424 unduplicated young people in 2016, defined as young people who spent one or more night in the shelter. The Youth Crisis Center served an additional 273 young people in their prevention program. While the child welfare system can be a housing support for minor youth in terms of providing funding for placement and housing, couch-surfing, doubled up, and otherwise housing insecure youth may remain unidentified and underserved due to systemic gaps in identification, service provision, or institutional cultural competence toward youth.

The above numbers reflect the minors who are touching our homelessness system via their educational home or the Youth Crisis Center. We know that this is an undercount of minor youth who are at-risk of homelessness and/or experience challenges to their social and emotional well-being. In the 2012-2013 school year, the Cincinnati Health Department reported that 9% of Cincinnati Public School students had a diagnosed emotional or behavioral health condition. If left unaddressed, these conditions could lead to challenges learning in the classroom, relationships with family, and lower well-being. All of these experiences are risk factors for homelessness.

At-risk pregnant and parenting youth in Hamilton County are an important and unique population to serve. It is a challenge to identify this population as it requires an overlay of risk screening, with pregnancy, birth and homelessness information. We have several data sources to help us better estimate the size of this population of youth and young adults.

HMIS data from 2016 includes 133 18-24 year olds that are heads of household. This means that they are young parents accessing the homeless system accompanied by their children. Additional young adults experiencing homelessness may also be parents, but their children are staying somewhere else and are not with them in shelter or housing. This information is not captured in HMIS.

In 2016, 190 children were born to mothers ages 12-17 and another 2,512 children were born to mothers between ages 18 and 24 years in Hamilton County, Ohio (Data from the Ohio Department of Health). Some of these new mothers may be experiencing housing instability or homelessness. Additional outreach is currently being done by health clinics to identify the number of young people whose pregnancies do not result in a live birth, and may be at risk of homelessness. It is unclear whether these health clinics screen for housing stability.

Summary
While adolescence and early adulthood are a challenging time for many, the social and emotional challenges faced by unaccompanied youth are particularly daunting. Risk factors for homelessness, such as disrupted social supports and relationships, can extend the duration of homelessness and worsen the consequences experienced by a young person.

Homeless youth are more likely than non-homeless peers to engage in survival sex, experience higher rates of STDs, and have pregnancy rates up to five times higher than non-homeless youth.[6] Homeless youth also experience greater exposure to violence, drug use, trauma, and chronic stress than non-homeless peers, putting them at risk for significant physical, mental health, and emotional distress.[7] The financial and social stressors of homelessness further complicate the precarious social and emotional well-being of transition-age youth. The risk factors above, coupled with the difficulty of accessing healthcare without consistent transportation, housing, and insurance, make homeless young people more likely to experience poor social, emotional, and mental health outcomes than non-homeless peers. It is critical that homeless young people have facilitated access to supportive, culturally competent, and non-judgmental health providers, as well as access to coordination of care and case management where necessary.

The challenges faced by unaccompanied young people are perpetuated by education, employment, and economic difficulties. Homeless youth are at higher risk of school drop-out than non-homeless peers.[8] Non-completion of high school and limited access to higher educational opportunities leads to lower educational attainment, lower income, and limited ability to obtain and maintain stable housing and employment.[9] Housing instability and homelessness make it difficult for young people to seek and maintain employment, as they are likely to lack a consistent address, contact information, transportation, clothing, and other job-seeking necessities. Many homeless youth need supports and assistance to pursue education and employment opportunities due to these barriers and prior negative experiences. This support is particularly critical for homeless young people with justice involvement, who may face additional employment and educational barriers due to their criminal records.

In short, we understand the dimensions of the youth homelessness problem in Cincinnati and Hamilton County. We understand root causes. We have a good understanding of which children and young people are at the very highest risk of becoming homeless. Annual costs for lost productivity (youth earning power), criminal justice programs, physical and mental health and homelessness are approximately $17,686,000 (UC Economics Center).

Decreasing the duration of homelessness, with the goal of eliminating it entirely, will support better educational, employment, housing, social, and emotional outcomes for young people. In the meantime, our community will ensure that young people experiencing homelessness are connected with the right supports, services, and people to help them navigate early adulthood. Facilitating meaningful, stable, and consistent connections is imperative to the well-being of unaccompanied youth, and is a cornerstone of the Cincinnati/Hamilton County plan to end youth homelessness. Innovative interventions such as Youth Dedicated Service Team, Expanded Shelter Diversion, Scholar

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[6] Begun, S. (2015). The paradox of homeless youth pregnancy: A review of challenges and opportunities. *Social work in health care*, *54*(5), 444-460.

[7] Brakenhoff, B., Jang, B., Slesnick, N., & Snyder, A. (2015). Longitudinal predictors of homelessness: findings from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth-97. *Journal of youth studies*, *18*(8), 1015-1034.
MacDonald, S. A. (2014). Managing risk: Self-regulation among homeless youth. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, *31*(6), 497-520.
Pacquiao, D. F., & Fried, D. M. Social Determinants of Youth Homelessness. *JOURNAL OF NURSING PRACTICE APPLICATIONS & REVIEWS OF RESEARCH,* 24.

[8] Brakenhoff, 2015
[9] Williams, D. R., & Jackson, P. B. (2005). Social sources of racial disparities in health. *Health affairs*, *24*(2), 325-334.

House and other projects in this plan will help Hamilton County reduce the number of youth who become homeless, and support those who have experienced homelessness.

Community Assets and Gaps in Youth Services

Assets - Hamilton County has many community assets that support young people. First and foremost is the network of agencies focused on ending homelessness, our Continuum of Care. All homeless housing and service projects participate in a single Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), VESTA®, giving us a wealth of data and information. Twenty-one participating organizations operate a coordinated entry process using a standardized assessment tool (VI-SPDAT). There are multiple supportive housing programs including Rapid Rehousing (RRH) with 16 CoC/ESG funded projects, and Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) with 22 CoC funded projects. 95% of the housing portfolio has zero barriers to entry—creating a system that operates on strong Housing First principles. Four organizations participate in Homeless Outreach programs, including one youth-specific street outreach team. The Solutions for Family Homelessness plan published in 2015 has a concentration on best practices in serving homeless families, including parenting youth.

Drawing on current practices we will identify ways to shore up Continuum of Care system infrastructure. For example, using a blend of both the Transition Age Youth and Family VI-SPDAT tools for better assessment. Introducing the Youth Connections Scale will be a way of identifying the number and strength of relationships a young person has and can assist with reconnection efforts.

Our community is service rich and has a history of building innovative service partnerships to meet the needs of subpopulations and intersecting identities. One example of this is Cooperative Agreement to Benefit Homeless Individuals (CABHI) which is a partnership between the Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health Services and homeless service agencies and uses evidence-based Critical Time Intervention. CABHI is a critical community partner that has helped Cincinnati/Hamilton County approach a true end to Chronic Homelessness. We draw on this project and its strategies to specifically serve pregnant and parenting youth in a team-based service model. Young parents straddle the youth and family systems, and are often involved in multiple systems with multiple service providers. Through YHDP we will strengthen partnerships, enhance communication, and make smarter connections. The Youth Dedicated Service Team will further support pregnant and parenting young people in navigating complex systems and needs by helping to reduce barriers and number of contacts. This team will be trained and equipped to address the intersecting needs of young people and young families in a developmentally appropriate and family-centric way. This will ensure that we serve both the head of household and the child in all realms, including social and emotional well-being. The proposed YHDP Housing projects allow for individualization of services that best meet the needs of all young people, parenting or not.

Our community has established a strong precedent for quality data collection through the Continuum of Care. We have also piloted data sharing between key system partners such as Lighthouse, county and state child welfare, Hamilton County Juvenile Court, and Cincinnati Public Schools as part of the HHS Youth At Risk of Homelessness grant. This groundwork paves the way for further data sharing.

Youth voice is valued in our community. The Lighthouse Youth Advisory Council was established in 2013 to give homeless youth and youth with foster care experience a say in changing youth-serving systems. Since 2013, LYAC members have helped influence their elected officials to pass Fostering Connections (Foster Care to 21), trained foster parents on how to best support teenagers, and shared their experiences at conferences and workshops. Additionally, Hamilton County child welfare runs a council for youth currently in foster care, the City of Cincinnati hosts an annual Youth Summit, and young people are active on neighborhood councils. The voices of young people

in Cincinnati and Hamilton County are evident throughout this plan, specifically in determining gaps in the system, creating innovative ideas, developing stronger service models, and in sharing feelings and experience through poems, such as the three included in this document.

Another asset is that community organizations are dedicated to partnering together and solving problems. This is demonstrated through collaboration in multiple initiatives to end youth homelessness, the Childhood Poverty Collaborative, United Way of Greater Cincinnati, The Greater Cincinnati Foundation, and more. Safe & Supported, an initiative to end homelessness for LGBTQ youth, has launched innovative services such as Host Homes, a mobile resource app, and cultural competency training. Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority has established eligibility preferences for both homeless individuals and youth aging out of foster care for their Housing Choice Vouchers and Asset Management housing options. All of these partners are responsive to community needs.

Finally, there is a statewide initiative to end homelessness led by the Corporation for Supportive Housing and Barbara Poppe and Associates. STEH and the CoC Youth Workgroup are in contact with this group, the Ohio Balance of State HUD Demonstration Project grantee, and the other 100-day challenge communities to share strategies and resources to ensure success in reaching this goal throughout Ohio.

Gaps - While the community has many valuable resources, there are identified gaps in services and housing options for young people. These gaps are more apparent when trying to navigate the complicated service system. Navigation of the system of care can be both mentally and physically exhausting, causing many young people to choose not to seek services when needed. This plan addresses the identified gaps with an overarching goal of ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

Just because I was a foster child
I am not a criminal
I am not a lost cause
I am not unsupported
I am a survivor

I wonder if the world knows
I hear the whispers
I see the apprehensiveness
I want to be free of judgement
I am me

Home is what I make it
I know I am home when I feel secure
I have been a foster child
Now I am a success story
I will be an amazing strong successful woman

-Lakasia Williams, Lighthouse Youth Advisory Council

Through planning efforts and many discussions with young people, the following gaps have been identified:
- Lack of programs and systems that support permanent connections to positive adults and supportive family relationships, including supports for reconnection and reunification
- Homelessness prevention is not youth-centric
- Services do not go beyond the basics. If we listen to young people when building service plans addressing an individual's needs, ideally there would be:
    - Consistent services before, during, and after exiting the homeless service system
    - Coordinated services between all youth serving systems
    - Consistent training among systems including Cultural Competency, Trauma Informed Care, and Positive Youth Development
- Limited housing options that are affordable and available
- CoC agencies and youth serving systems don't participate in data sharing causing gaps in services and between systems
- Lack of a youth-driven policy agenda limits lasting change for the community
- County-wide transportation system has many gaps in service (routes, frequency, and safety) that impact youth access to services/jobs/school etc.
- Connections to youth-centered employment training, assistance and education are limited and need to be strengthened
- Substance abuse addiction treatment including detox beds and medication-assisted treatment are difficult to access
- Limited legal services for homeless youth and limited representation for youth and families involved with the child welfare system
- High eviction rate—Cincinnati is ranked 10th out of the top 50 largest metro areas in the U.S. About one in 20 Cincinnati renters (4.8 percent) using the apartment rental website, ApartmentList.com were either evicted or threatened with eviction from their most recent address, according to Apartment List's 2017 rental survey. We do not have a break down based on age of the renter.[10]

The USICH Framework

The *USICH Framework for Ending Youth Homelessness* supports improved outcomes for all youth experiencing homelessness in the areas of (1) stable housing, (2) permanent connections, (3) education/employment, and (4) social-emotional well-being. Both the USICH framework and research on system integration emphasize the importance of youth-serving agencies and systems working together. The willingness of representatives from both public and private agencies to work collaboratively has been a powerful asset in the local planning process and in service delivery.

Planned system change is supported by a local focus on two USICH strategies of 1) improving data quality and collection on youth experiencing homelessness, and, 2) building capacity for service delivery.

USICH affirms that Housing First is a critical principle that must be in place to end youth homelessness. Housing First means offering permanent housing to young adults without any preconditions or barriers. This is a proven approach and is grounded in the assumption that all young adults can achieve housing stability when provided the appropriate level of services and supports. The CoC prioritizes Housing First Principles in all current CoC housing/service projects and the Four Core Outcomes and Housing First Principles will be strongly communicated to all partners participating

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[10] https://www.cincinnati.com/story/money/2017/10/26/escalating-rents-and-widespread-poverty-pushed-cincinnati-into-top-10-metro-areas-were-residents-fac/798150001/

in the implementation of YHDP and required of all partners administering HUD funded YHDP projects.

Planning Structure

To date, the eight-month strategic planning process was supported by more than 27 planning members, identified in Appendix A. Planners also hosted one community forum with an open invitation to all community members and youth to participate. Approximately 85 people attended.

The process was organized to leverage the strengths and time of each individual. The Leadership team met weekly and the Strategic Planning Committee met bi-weekly from March through June. Issue-specific teams were created and met at least twice to generate innovative ideas for projects. The teams included:

1. LGBTQ Youth
2. Housing
3. Education and Employment
4. System Services and Resource Navigation

The YHDP planning process incorporated the existing work of the Safe and Supported Initiative to End LGBTQ Youth Homelessness and Watch Me Rise[11] focused on ending homelessness for youth with child welfare experience. These teams provided insight into serving foster youth, and Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, and Questioning (LGBTQ) youth. Key strategies were shared with YHDP planning partners and are included and aligned with this plan (e.g. Host Homes).

Shared Vision

The Strategic Planning committee drafted, revised and approved the vision statement. This vision statement, widely shared with partners, is the driving force for the Plan.

We envision Cincinnati and Hamilton County, OH as a place where youth homelessness is rare, brief and non-recurring.

Ending youth homelessness is more than just providing housing.   We embrace a set of strategies and assembled resources to assure that unstably housed, unaccompanied, and parenting youth are welcomed into a system with culturally competent, empathic professionals who are trained to support each person's path toward stable housing, meaningful employment and expectations for a successful life. There are no barriers for individuals seeking access to these opportunities, and the system is easy to navigate. Our system is regarded as a best-practice of care and prevention and is supported by a data collection system that provides accurate and timely information.

This innovative system is actively designed and supported by youth and young adults with lived experience of homelessness, businesses, philanthropic organizations, public institutions, volunteers, non-profits and public policy-makers. The system and continuous partner engagement ensure our community has the tools to sustain our success of making youth homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring.

Definitions

Youth are defined as individuals in Hamilton County age 24 and under.

For this Plan, **"homeless"** or **"homelessness"** is defined as a person who experiences one or more of the following:

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[11] HHS funded Youth At Risk of Homelessness initiative

1. Sleeping in a shelter, on the street or in a place not generally meant for sleeping (cars, abandoned buildings, etc.)
2. Fleeing domestic violence
3. Doubled up or couch-surfing—relying on others for a place to stay
4. Unstably housed—as evidenced by many moves in a short period of time

Each YHDP Project Application submitted for HUD funding will include the specific definition of homelessness that will be applied.

"Chronic Homelessness" is defined as: (1) an unaccompanied homeless individual with any disabling condition (or a family with at least one adult member who has a disabling condition) who has been continuously homeless for a year or more, OR (2) who has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years totaling at least 12 months. A disabling condition could include a diagnosable substance abuse disorder, a serious mental illness, a developmental disability and/or a chronic physical illness or disability.

"Housing First" is defined as offering permanent housing to young adults without any barriers or preconditions. This reflects our community value that all young adults can achieve housing stability when provided with the appropriate level of services and supports.

Outcomes

Youth Outcomes

Aligned with the USICH Framework to End Homelessness, the plan focuses on improving outcomes for homeless youth in four core areas:

1. Stable Housing
2. Permanent Connections
3. Education and Employment
4. Social and Emotional Well-Being

Stable housing, permanent connections, education/employment, and well-being are included as the primary outcomes in this intervention model and are described below. By designing interventions that target risk and protective factors, USICH anticipates positive impacts on broader life outcomes that signal healthy and productive transitions to adulthood. Local intervention strategies should strengthen the youth's protective factors and reduce their risk factors. Improvements on risk and protective factors can serve as pathways to achieve better outcomes.

Stable housing includes a safe and reliable place to call home. Stable housing fulfills a critical and basic need for homeless youth. It is essential to enable functioning across a range of life activities. Lack of stable housing, on the other hand, exposes young people to a multitude of risks on the streets.

Permanent connections include ongoing attachments to families, communities, schools, and other positive social networks. Connections support young people's ability to access new ideas and opportunities to thrive and they provide a social safety net when young people are at-risk of re-entering homelessness.

Education/employment includes high performance in and completion of educational and training activities, especially for younger youth, and starting and maintaining adequate and stable employment, particularly for older youth. Achievements in education and employment increase a youth's capacity to be self-supporting and to avoid future homelessness.

Well-being refers to the social and emotional functioning of homeless youth. It includes the development of key

competencies, attitudes, and behaviors that equip a young person experiencing homelessness to avoid unhealthy risks and to succeed across multiple domains of daily life, including school, work, relationships, and community.

System Level Outcomes

Several key innovations and projects all align to contribute to overall system improvements. These measures are outlined here. Additional outcomes are listed after each goal in the Community Plan section. We will measure our success[12] in ending youth homelessness by:
- Reducing the percentage of youth who become homeless by over 50% by 2020 (825 unduplicated youth to 400 unduplicated youth).
- Reducing the percentage of youth who return to homelessness within 2 years after exiting from housing and/or shelter programs to permanent destinations from 24% to 10% by 2020.
- Reducing the average length of homeless episodes from 38 days to 21 days by 2020.
- Increasing the percentage of youth who exit shelter and become permanently housed (during the operating year) from 65.4% to 80% by 2020.

Section II. KEYS - Community Plan to End Youth Homelessness

The Cincinnati/Hamilton County Community KEYS Plan to End Youth Homelessness has 5 key goals. Specific objectives and activities are listed below. Detailed Project Descriptions are available in the YHDP Project Section III of this document. The person or agency that will be accountable for each Objective or Activity is listed in the Appendix.

Goals, Objectives, Outcomes

Goal 1: Prevent homelessness before it occurs.
Purpose: The initiative will increase available resources and strategies to prevent young people from becoming homeless in the first place. This will reduce the overall demand on the system and reduce the trauma that young people experience while homeless.

OBJECTIVE 1A: Increase Homelessness Prevention resources.
1. Activity: Develop and launch youth-centered reconnection program
2. Activity: Increase services provided by existing Central Access Point (CAP) hotline to include reconnection
3. Activity: Improve existing Shelter Diversion program to provide youth appropriate services
4. Activity: Increase financial resources for Shelter Diversion

OBJECTIVE 1B: Standardize screening and assessment of youth at imminent risk of experiencing episodic homelessness to ensure equitable and quick connection to available services.
1. Activity: Implement phase 1 screening tool to assess housing and service need of all youth identified as at imminent risk of homelessness

Outcomes:
- Increase percentage of youth diverted from emergency shelter

Goal 2: Provide safe and appropriate shelter and services to all willing youth who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness.
Purpose: Youth have a range of needs and the shelter and services offered will meet the specific needs of all youth including LGBTQ youth, pregnant/parenting youth, young victims of sex trafficking, and youth exiting foster care or criminal justice systems.

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[12] Benchmarks refer to VESTA data from the Partnership Center accessed June 2017.

OBJECTIVE 2A: Offer all homeless youth immediate connections to services via the Youth Dedicated Service Team
1. Activity: Develop and implement Youth Dedicated Service team.

OBJECTIVE 2B: Increase Safe Shelter options.
1. Activity: Establish Safe Shelter beds at Lighthouse Sheakley Center for Youth, the community's emergency shelter dedicated to serving 18-24-year-olds
2. Activity: Ensure all shelter staff are culturally competent in working with youth and trained in Trauma Informed Care and Positive Youth Development

Outcomes:
- Decrease number of youth identified as sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation
- Increase percentage of homeless youth connected to services

Goal 3: Reduce the length of homeless episodes experienced by youth.

Purpose: Reduce the amount of time that a young person spends waiting for housing, in shelter or on the street. The more efficiently youth move through the system, the less likely they will be to experience additional trauma. A new focus on reconnecting with natural and positive supports such as family and friends (either as a housing option, or as a support to address the barriers that led to homelessness) will help ensure that every youth has identified permanent connections.

OBJECTIVE 3A: Expand housing options for youth that are affordable, available, and meet their individual needs.
1. Activity: Implement Progressive Engagement Housing strategies
2. Activity: Add Housing Navigators to the system to implement landlord engagement strategies

OBJECTIVE 3B: Help youth reunify with or return home to their given or chosen families, as desired.
1. Activity: Develop a reconnection program to increase the number of youth exiting shelter to permanent friends/family.
2. Activity: Provide the on-going support needed to make those relationships healthy and housing placement successful.

Outcomes:
- Evaluation of ability to offer every young person the appropriate housing intervention (tracked on the by-name list)
- Increase percentage of family interventions and reconnections
- Decrease recidivism from clients exiting to friends and family from 33% to 10%

Goal 4: Ensure that youth exiting the homeless system have the supports they need to remain housed.

Purpose: Youth need on-going supports to help them achieve progress in the realms of stable housing, permanent connections, natural supports, education/employment and social and emotional well-being.

OBJECTIVE 4A: Establish an aftercare program with clear connection to the CAP line for emergency assistance and homelessness prevention if needed at a future moment.
1. Activity: Develop and implement Youth Dedicated Service Team
2. Activity: Establish a systemic aftercare program for all youth exiting the homeless system

OBJECTIVE 4B: Institutionalize a system reconnection program to build supports for all young people.
1. Activity: Develop and launch youth-centered reconnection program

OBJECTIVE 4C: Support youth to achieve goals that will help them achieve long term stability.
1. Activity: In addition to the success measures determined by the funding sources of the YHDP projects (housing, income, recidivism, etc.), allow young people to set their own goals

OBJECTIVE 4D: Improve ability to find and maintain services and housing.
1. Activity: Add youth-dedicated Housing Navigators to the system and improve landlord relationships
2. Activity: Increase affordable housing options through policy agenda

Outcomes:

- Percent decrease in recidivism
- Increase percentage of youth achieving their self-identified goals
- Increase availability of affordable housing units in Hamilton County
- Increase the success of reconnection efforts when supportive services continue after reunification is made

Goal 5: Encourage innovation, system change and sustainability within the CoC and larger community.
Purpose: Data collection and analysis will lead to CoC system changes that allow for evaluation of success and continuous innovation. Equity for young people throughout our system is highly valued and our goal is that youth of color and LGBTQ youth have parity in access and outcomes when compared with their peers. A policy agenda will identify and remove barriers for young people achieving housing stability. Identifying multiple funding sources will ensure sustainability of the projects.

OBJECTIVE 5A: Improve data quality, use and sharing to better understand the needs of youth and the impact of community services.
1. Activity: Ensure consistent HMIS data collection processes across CoC youth serving agencies
2. Activity: Implementation and regular review of youth by-name list maintained in HMIS, including racial equity measures
3. Activity: Development of a data dashboard to track ongoing efforts locally and nationally
4. Activity: Establishment of a plan for data sharing between key youth serving systems.
5. Activity: All outcomes will be examined with a focus on equitable outcomes for youth. Outcomes will be based on race, ethnicity, gender identity, and sexual orientation; success is defined as parity for all populations.

OBJECTIVE 5B: Increase collaboration between youth serving systems and track our community progress toward ending youth homelessness.
1. Activity: Launch a collaborative CoC Youth Workgroup to continue innovative decision making, develop best practices and review of outcomes/progress
2. Activity: Ensure youth participation in the system through creation of paid youth leader positions

OBJECTIVE 5C: Encourage and leverage innovative ideas and partnerships to end youth homelessness among organizations both inside and outside the CoC, such as: corporations, chambers, workforce organizations, etc.
1. Activity: Establish youth preference in identified systems to ensure youth have immediate access to services when needed
2. Activity: Explore adoption and implementation of a local Purple Umbrella project
3. Activity: Explore transportation innovation and partnerships
4. Activity: Explore data sharing technologies and local partnerships to begin implementation of predictive analysis with available data

OBJECTIVE 5D: Ensure funding to support activities in this plan.
1. Activity: Establish community process to incorporate HUD YHDP funding into the local CoC prioritization process
2. Activity: Explore option of flexible funds to meet unanticipated infrastructural needs
3. Activity: Identify systemic partnerships to improve services and better leverage funding and resources
4. Activity: Host activities for current and potential funders such as briefings, tours, and conversations with Youth Leaders
5. Activity: Develop an Ending Youth Homelessness communication plan and media strategy

OBJECTIVE 5E: Ensure all CoC staff working with youth are culturally competent, trauma informed, and utilize a positive youth development framework to ensure equitable youth outcomes.
1. Activity: Establish a community-wide expectation of incorporating relevant methodologies into policy and practice across the youth serving systems

2. Activity: Create systemic response to ensure all youth are served consistently throughout the system
3. Activity: Ensure staff in HUD Demo projects reflect the race, culture, and/or lived experience of the populations they serve and ensure governance and oversight bodies include youth of color and LGBTQ youth
4. Activity: Provide cultural competency training for CoC and youth-serving system staff

OBJECTIVE 5F: Create system changes through improved collaboration and development of a policy agenda to better support youth success and prevent homelessness.

1. Activity: Develop a joint community policy agenda with other partners working to end youth homelessness and poverty
2. Activity: Implement identified system and policy changes to achieve goals
3. Activity: Align efforts with and support relevant community initiatives

Outcomes:
- Use data analytics to make system changes
    - All outcomes will be examined based on race, ethnicity, gender identity, and sexual orientation; success is defined as parity for all populations.
- 100% of youth serving CoC agencies participating in new CoC Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project Plan structure and implementation
- Increase youth representation in the system, including youth involvement as decision makers in the Youth Workgroup
- Increase in the number of programs/resources with a new prioritization for youth 18-24
- Increase in new funders participating in HUD Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project projects
- Increase number of system providers trained in cultural competency, Trauma Informed Care, and Positive Youth Development

Continuous Quality Improvement and Evaluation

Cincinnati/Hamilton County anticipates a great deal of learning and continuous improvement of homeless youth systems and services as a result of this demonstration project, both through internal continuous quality improvement and evaluation and incorporation of learning shared by other demonstration communities. On a systems level, we will track progress toward the goals and objectives formalized in this plan, making process and programmatic adjustments where necessary.

The HUD Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project Technical Assistance Team will assist with the ongoing development and support of local continuous quality improvement strategies. Each partner organization and system will evaluate their own programs and activities internally, using both qualitative and quantitative methods, and Strategies to End Homelessness, local CoC lead and Unified Funding Agency, will facilitate systems review. Additionally, a Data Dashboard will be developed to track key data points across outcomes identified for this population, allowing our community to delve into deeper analysis of success-promoting factors, and better measurement across indicators of equity (race, sexual orientation, gender, etc.). Youth Workgroup team members will use this information to assess the impact of innovative strategies and make changes as necessary. Strategies to End Homelessness will create a new full-time position to oversee the HUD funded Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project with a focus on implementation, benchmarking success, and Continuous Quality Improvement. (See Youth Program Coordinator job description in Appendix.) The YHDP Program Coordinator will monitor progress and provide updates. Ultimately, the Youth Workgroup will be responsible for establishing and monitoring benchmarks for progress, and reporting regularly to the CoC.

In preparation for implementation, a CQI/Data Implementation Team has been formed within the CoC Youth Workgroup, composed of Youth Workgroup members including agency representatives, community members, and youth with lived experience. This team will work to identify CQI/data needs and gaps, and will partner with Data TA providers in order to ensure that these barriers are addressed in a manner that supports youth-centered, equity-based, systemic innovation. This team will study how youth-determined goals can be integrated into measures of program success, and will be key in ensuring that community members and partners are involved in the design and development of new data strategies, including the proposed Data Dashboard and cross-system data sharing plans. Enhancing current data collection and analysis practices to enable predictive analysis will be a critical step in facilitating systems change by enabling greater youth choice and housing flexibility, and ensuring efficient use of funding. Additional implementation teams have been formed and will continue to be formed as needed in order to facilitate intensive community exploration, learning, and quality improvement efforts.

Our Continuous Quality Improvement process will:

- Collect and analyze data from CoC members in accordance with CoC timelines and processes
- Facilitate community co-learning through regularly scheduled monthly Youth Workgroup meetings, led by the Youth Program Coordinator and Youth Workgroup chair
- Set and monitor benchmarks for progress in the CoC Youth Workgroup
- Utilize the expertise of community members and agency representatives in identifying opportunities for improvement of data collection, analysis, and application through the CQI/Data Implementation Team
- Elevate and incorporate the voice of youth with lived experience through qualitative data collection; incorporation of youth-identified goals in outcome measurement; and youth involvement in the Youth Workgroup, as Youth Leads, and as members of the Youth Advisory Council
- Ensure Housing First principles are implemented in all HUD funded YHDP projects
- Incorporate learning from other HUD YHDP demonstration sites and ongoing HUD-sponsored learning opportunities, including calls and webinars
- Utilize technical assistance (TA) to assess and troubleshoot project implementation and resulting progress toward goals and objectives
- Develop and utilize a Data Dashboard to assess progress toward improved and equitable youth outcomes

Plan Implementation and Governance Structure
The YHDP Strategic Planning Team pictured below, has transitioned to the Continuum of Care Youth Workgroup.
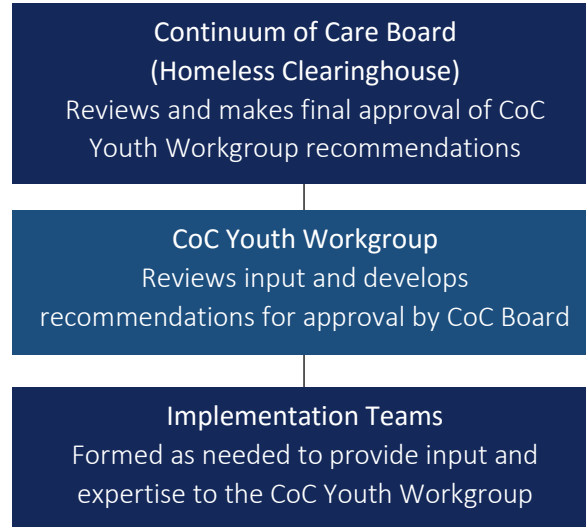

Cincinnati YHDP CoC Youth Workgroup —June 2017

Cincinnati/Hamilton County YHDP Governance Structure

The structure for governance and approval of the YHDP Plan, Project Applications and ongoing oversight during implementation is illustrated below.

Cincinnati/Hamilton County, Ohio – YHDP Decision-Making Structure

Continuum of Care Board
(Homeless Clearinghouse)
Reviews and makes final approval of CoC Youth Workgroup recommendations

CoC Youth Workgroup
Reviews input and develops recommendations for approval by CoC Board

Implementation Teams
Formed as needed to provide input and expertise to the CoC Youth Workgroup

CoC Youth Workgroup includes Youth Leads (LYAC), Hamilton County Job & Family Services (child welfare), Strategies to End Homelessness (UFA), Lighthouse Youth & Family Services (lead agency), government officials, funders, system partners, individuals with lived experiences and providers. Complete list in appendix.

As the community moves from planning to finalization of the Plan, a joint committee of decision-makers and key stakeholders, now known as the CoC Youth Workgroup, will convene monthly. During implementation, the meeting schedule will be determined to meet the needs of the project.

The community's overall decision-making process for YHDP involves the Cincinnati Hamilton County Continuum of Care Board (locally, the "Homeless Clearinghouse") and the CoC Youth Workgroup. The CoC Youth Workgroup's process for decision making is consensus-based; the group must feel 80%* comfortable in affirming the final plan and all project applications. If one of the Key Partners' representatives on the CoC Youth Workgroup does not approve the plan or recommendations, we will continue to refine it to reach agreement. (*80% comfortable – We strive for each person to be 80% comfortable and supportive of recommendations. We require a minimum of 80% of the Workgroup to be 80% comfortable in approving any recommendation and/or project plan.)

Decision-Making Entities
The following entities represent the decision-making bodies for YHDP.

Cincinnati/Hamilton County Continuum of Care Board, the Homeless Clearinghouse
This group is the decision-making body of the Continuum of Care and is organized to ensure that organizations serving the homeless population are working in collaboration with a mission to end homelessness.   The Clearinghouse is a seated group with representatives from: local government, local Unified Funding Agency, homeless service providers specifically receiving Continuum of Care, Emergency Solutions Grant, Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS and/or Runaway and Homeless Youth funding, 8 local work group chairs, Health Care for the Homeless, Victims Service Providers, Education Liaisons, and also includes people with lived

experience with homelessness. The chair of the CoC Youth Workgroup is the Runaway and Homeless Youth representative on the Clearinghouse and therefore is a voting member on the CoC Board. The Clearinghouse is responsible for making final approval on all recommendations presented by the workgroups.

Continuum of Care Youth Workgroup

This decision-making body is a CoC Workgroup that coordinates input and synthesizes recommendations for presentation to the CoC Clearinghouse. The Workgroup is an open group and comprised of key partners including Strategies to End Homelessness, Lighthouse Youth and Family Services, youth leads representing the Lighthouse Youth Advisory Council, and Hamilton County Job and Family Services. Other regularly participating workgroup members represent funders, government officials, individuals with experiences of homelessness, system partners, and direct service providers. In addition to coordinating input and developing recommendations, the workgroup reviews, monitors and approves recommendations for ongoing implementation of the KEYS Plan to End Youth Homelessness and all youth homelessness project applications. CoC Youth Workgroup recommendations receive final approval from the Clearinghouse.

Workgroup members will work closely with the Youth Program Coordinator and play a critical role in establishing benchmarks for youth and system outcomes, the CQI process, and ensuring youth participation on the workgroup. The CoC Youth Workgroup conducts their work through a lens of equity and will use available data to set benchmarks and measure progress towards achieving equitable outcomes of youth of color and LGBTQ youth in our homeless system.

This Workgroup will also make decisions on how to best utilize the $50,000 of flexible funds for unidentified implementation costs recommended in this plan(if awarded). The vetting process will involve review of implementation plans for expenses to create stronger infrastructure and significant impact on the lives of young people experiencing homelessness. Before funding is expended from the flexible funding pool, project descriptions and anticipated expenses will be vetted through the CoC Youth Workgroup and Unified Funding Agency.

The Youth Workgroup Chair is the RHY Representative on the Homeless Clearinghouse. The Workgroup Chair and CoC Youth Workgroup ensure transparency and ongoing communications with the CoC Clearinghouse which approves and oversees all CoC activities, including the YHDP effort.

Youth Advisory Council members recruited through and supported by Lighthouse Youth and Family Services (YHDP Lead Agency) provide direct input on all issues related to youth homelessness. They provide insight and expertise in the YHDP planning process; generate ideas for system innovation; provide input and feedback on strategies to reach our goals/objectives. At their monthly meetings, they approve recommendations for the Coordinated Community Plan and all project applications.

Representatives from Hamilton County Job and Family Services (child welfare) are active partners in the YHDP process, providing input and expertise on strategies and interventions through participation on the YHDP Planning Team, CoC Youth Workgroup and joint decision-making meetings.

Other Groups Providing Input and Expertise
CoC Youth Workgroup Implementation Teams

From time to time, Implementation Teams may be initiated to gather information and develop specific policies, procedures and input which will be presented to the CoC Youth Workgroup for review. These groups will be time-

limited based on completion of the specific project and may include members with specific expertise. These teams will be chaired by CoC Youth Workgroup members or staff from the HUD Demonstration Project Lead agency or Unified Funding Agency. Examples of Implementation teams include teams tackling these topics: By-Name list, Youth Dedicated Services Team, and Policy & Partnerships.

Periodic Reviews
This document will be reviewed annually and updated as needed.

Decision-Making Role of LYAC members
Youth voice is valued in our community. The Lighthouse Youth Advisory Council was established in 2013 to give homeless youth and youth with foster care experience a say in changing youth-serving systems. Since 2013, LYAC members have helped influence their elected officials to pass Fostering Connections, trained foster parents on how to best support teenagers, shared their experiences in conference keynotes and workshops and so much more. Additionally, Hamilton County child welfare runs a council for youth currently in foster care, the City of Cincinnati hosts an annual Youth Summit, and young people are active on neighborhood councils.

The role of youth is critical in the YHDP Implementation Process. The following activities will:
- Host LYAC meetings monthly—recruiting and engaging a diverse array of young people
    - Led by the Lighthouse Planning and Policy Coordinator
- Hire two youth lead positions to focus specifically on LYAC member recruitment and YHDP activities (YHDP funded—supervised by Lighthouse Planning and Policy Coordinator)
    - YHDP Youth Lead Job Description
        - Assist Coordinator with leading LYAC meetings; provide updates and inform youth about upcoming YHDP events
        - Assist with recruiting new youth members
        - Onboarding new members; greeting youth when they arrive and staying after meetings to help answer questions
        - Assist with set up and clean up from meetings
        - Send reminders to youth about meetings
        - Act as mentors to other council members
        - Participate on the CoC Youth Workgroup
        - Attend YHDP Leads meetings as available
- Participate on the CoC Youth Workgroup
- Provide stipends and transportation funds for youth participation in YHDP activities (YHDP funded)
- Work with our TA team to identify ways to strengthen youth participation in our process

For submission of all projects and the final plan, the Youth Leads (representing the LYAC) must feel comfortable and affirm the plan and projects. If one of the key partners (HCJFS (Child Welfare), LYAC, Strategies or Lighthouse) does not approve the plan/project then we will continue the conversations.

Section III. YHDP Projects

The YHDP Strategic Planning Committee spent several weeks hosting small group targeted conversations with community experts around the youth-specific systems. Through these discussions, we quickly realized that Hamilton County, and especially Cincinnati, is a hub of resources, but the system is difficult to navigate. Young people feel like decisions are being made for them instead of with them, and systems often seem unapproachable and off limits to those in need. Based on this information, the group determined that many fundamental barriers

could be alleviated by making system improvements on existing models and by increasing partnerships within the community. A Youth Dedicated Service Team, increased homelessness prevention efforts, more housing options, increased data sharing between systems, and flexible funding to address immediate needs have been identified as immediate ways to begin the YHDP projects and begin the process of system-level innovation.

The following chart is a quick snap shot of the concepts created by community members and reviewed by the Strategic Planning Committee. Highlighted concepts (in Blue below) contain new innovations to our community that we believe will impact youth homelessness. The following categories are defined, some projects may fall into multiple categories and are listed where they currently fit best. Projects may shift categories as our plan and needs evolve.

1. Preliminary matches for HUD funding: Projects we believe are eligible for HUD funds and demonstrate innovation
2. System Improvements to Existing Models: Current programs that are working but could be improved or expanded to better serve youth.
3. Partnership Opportunities: Projects that would be led by a partner agency, leveraging existing resources in the community outside of the CoC
4. Additional Funding and Support Required: Projects that are larger in scale and would require an infusion of funds, or a strong partnership with other entities. May not be eligible for HUD/CoC funds.

Preliminary Matches for HUD Funding	System Improvements to Existing Models	Partnership Opportunities	Additional Funding & Support Required
Youth Dedicated Service Team	Safe Shelter	Scholar House	Transportation Initiatives
Homelessness Prevention	Street Outreach	Purple Umbrella Campaign	Creation of mobile application for increased system navigation
Progressive Engagement Housing (serving all populations)	Data Collection	Housing Campus for Victims of Human Trafficking	Youth One-Stop Shop to address all needs in one place
Housing Specialists	Cultural Competency, Trauma Informed Care, and Positive Youth Development	Site-Based Housing for Pregnant Women	
Data Sharing Capabilities	Youth Centered Coordinated Entry Improvements	Employment	
Flexible Funding to Support Community Infrastructure			

YHDP Project Descriptions: Preliminary Matches for HUD Funding

Youth Dedicated Service Team
Innovations throughout our system will strengthen access to resources and youth-centered care. The Youth Dedicated Services Team provides one point of contact that accompanies the youth through the system, connecting them to the level of care they need. They also serve as an Aftercare contact so the youth has a connection to reach out to after reducing their system supports.

The team would be modeled after our community's SAMSHA-funded Cooperative Agreement to Benefit Homeless Individuals (CABHI) team, managed by Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health, and the Homeless Individual Plan (HIP) team managed by Shelterhouse.

Street Outreach workers would call in the Youth Dedicated Services team to provide intensive services to youth while they are in or near the homeless services system. Team members will all be trained in housing first, harm reduction, and trauma informed care principles, would provide cross-system case management, and would focus on youth specific issues while developing expertise in youth cultural competency. The team would include specialists to work with sub-populations such as parenting, pregnant, and LGBTQ youth; experts in working on the needs of children of young parents; and system navigators who assist in linking youth to other community services. The team would work with all young people in shelter diversion, emergency shelters, housing projects, and aftercare. Youth living on the street would continue to work with street outreach specialists, but also be connected to the youth service team for case management assistance.

The team would be staffed 24/7 and while certain service providers may work closely with some young people in particular subpopulations, essentially, the entire team would be able to work with each young person. Services would include life skills development, case management, assistance with system navigation, and more.

Identifying natural supports will be a focus of the Youth Services Team. These natural supports will help each young person strengthen or re-establish relationships with supportive connections. The Youth Connections Scale may be used as an engagement and measurement tool.

Aftercare: Analysis of local recidivism data revealed a trend in which youth re-enter the system around 18-24 months after successfully exiting a project. This informs the design of an extended Aftercare program lasting 2 or more years, with more intense contact around 1 year to ensure that the young people have the supports they need and an identified support system to troubleshoot challenges. This approach will help reduce recidivism.

A lead agency will need to be determined to operate this team across the Continuum. Initially we plan to start with 10 case managers at an estimated cost of $600,000. The team's interactions with all homeless service providers need to be better defined in order to ensure that all young people are served consistently. For instance, this team will meet often to review the by-name list. The team may also be responsible for completing the Transition Age Youth (TAY) VI-SPDAT assessment with youth entering the system, collecting and sharing data, working with housing navigators to ensure each youth's first placement occurs within three weeks, and having 3 touchpoints each week with youth during the first 3 months.

This project could be extended to include training of other service providers in different systems (education, child welfare, etc.) to ensure consistent and collaborative care across systems.

Expanded Homelessness Prevention

Cincinnati operates a successful Shelter Diversion program to assist people identified at imminent risk of entering the homeless system. Shelter Diversion services are designed to systemically prevent youth from entering emergency shelters or finding themselves sleeping in places not meant for human habitation, such as on the streets. Shelter Diversion targets youth who statistically are most likely to be homeless in the near future; those who have already lost their own housing, are doubled up, and are running out of places to stay. According to Strategies to End Homelessness, Shelter Diversion is the most cost-effective intervention program utilized in the

system. In 2016, STEH served 940 people in the community's existing Shelter Diversion program; only 86 individuals were between the ages of 18 and 24, representing a mere 7% of the program.

Average Cost of Services per Person
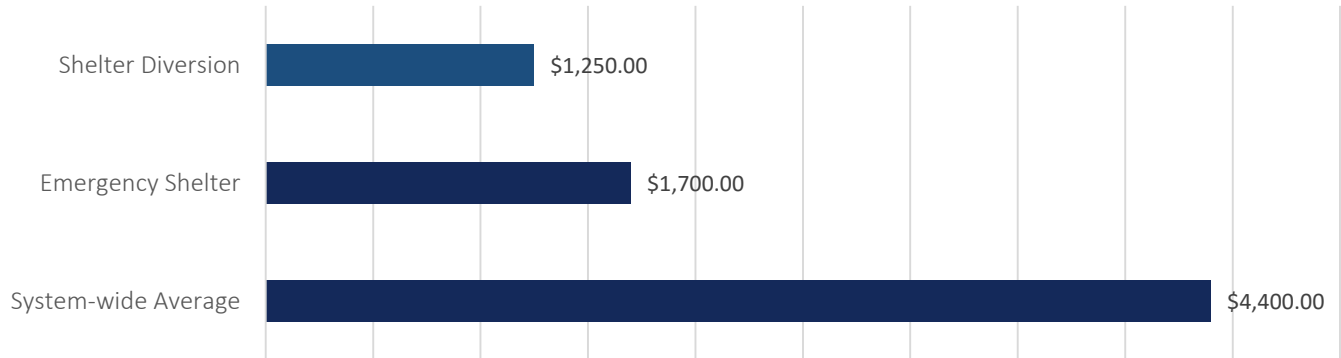
The plan calls for a revision of the current Shelter Diversion services to include innovative and systemic reconnection and reunification strategies as well as an increase in funding for short term rental assistance available to young people in need of short term financial assistance and supportive services.

Reconnection – Assisting young people on the verge of homelessness to re-connect with natural supports, their family, or friends is a first step in addressing youth homelessness. The Youth Dedicated Service Team will begin these discussions with all young people who present for emergency shelter before an intake into the homeless program is complete. This puts Shelter Diversion at the front door of the shelter, ensuring every young person sleeping in shelter does not have another safe place to sleep. Reconnection strategies created to improve family relationships after a separation, when it is safe to do so, with or without physical unification, will also be incorporated into the Youth Specific Coordinated Entry Process (see page 33) to help young people self-resolve barriers before experiencing homelessness. Data will be tracked in HMIS and the Youth Dedicated Service Team will follow-up with all young people with support to monitor success and additional interventions.

Shelter Diversion – Designed to provide short term rental assistance and robust case management services to households on the verge of homelessness, this program is best targeted towards youth who are couch surfing and running out of places to stay. It is an efficient and effective way to link youth with their first apartment by providing early rental assistance and intensive case management services. It is best targeted towards higher-functioning youth who would benefit from concentrated short term assistance but are more likely to be successfully self-sufficient with 3-6 months of rental assistance and continued case management after the financial assistance has ended.

Case management, provided by the Youth Dedicated Service Team, will focus on housing stability, increasing employment/income, and meeting additional needs identified by the young people. In both Reconnection and Shelter Diversion, case management will extend as long as needed and be available to participants even after program participation has ended.

Host Homes - The Host Home Program currently serves only LGBTQ young adults (aged 18-24), and relies on volunteers in the community who open a room in their home for up to one year. Through YHDP, the Host Home program will be expanded to serve all young people. During the year that a young person is served in a host home, hosts are responsible for providing them with free room and board as well as acting as a mentor. Hosts will receive appropriate compensation to provide their services.   Expansion of the program would double capacity, enabling the program to house 20 clients at any given time. This program is especially beneficial to youth at imminent risk of homelessness who would benefit from fostering a positive adult connection as part of their treatment plan. The Host Homes program links youth with positive adult role models to promote their permanent connections in the community and strengthen their social and emotional well-being. Including case management as part of the program helps youth find gainful employment, re-engage in or finish their education, and pursue other youth-defined goals that lead to stability.

Progressive Engagement Housing Model

The Cincinnati/Hamilton County CoC will institute a Progressive Engagement Housing Model to best serve the needs of young people. This innovation to the community would allow funding to be administered where needed and enable the community to immediately respond to specific housing needs. See the accompanying visual in the Appendix. Progressive Engagement is designed to provide the lightest touch to clients in need while allowing for flexibility to transition between housing programs/options if needed. While the community will make youth-centered improvements to the existing Coordinated Entry system (see page 33) with a goal of connecting young people to appropriate housing interventions, we recognize that long-term housing needs are not always clear at the time of initial assessment and that the housing needs of a young person change throughout the duration of services. Under the Progressive Engagement Housing model, all young people who need a housing intervention will start in Rapid Re-Housing, with Permanent Supportive Housing utilized only for young people with a demonstrated need for long-term supportive housing. Individualized services will be provided by the Youth Dedicated Service Team detailed on page 22. The community is not able to anticipate how much of each housing component is needed to meet the needs of young people experiencing homelessness having never had an opportunity to offer them a choice; currently, youth are offered traditional housing interventions when they present for services and a more flexible system would allow for individualized care.

Because of the lack of data on housing options, and in search of an innovative model, YHDP calls for a housing funding pool with flexibility to be used for the following housing interventions.

Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) is an intervention housing model through which households experiencing homelessness move to permanent housing quickly. A fundamental goal of RRH is to reduce the amount of time a person is homeless. RRH helps households living on the streets or in emergency shelters solve the practical and immediate challenges to obtaining housing while reducing the amount of time they experience homelessness, thus avoiding a near-term return to homelessness and linking people to community resources that will enable them to achieve long-term housing stability. Cincinnati will institute two types of RRH, knowing that young people may often initially move into site-based housing and later graduate to a more independent living environment in a scattered site unit. Both RRH models are permanent housing, driven by client choice and supporting a goal of housing stability even after rental assistance ends. Lengths of stay in RRH will likely vary, given that young people experience a range of barriers and vulnerabilities. The Youth Service Team will review the by-name list of all homeless and housed young people in order to cooperatively evaluate care plans

and the need for financial assistance. The Team will make recommendations regarding the need for continued assistance for each young person.

- **Scattered Site RRH** is housing where the client is the lease holder of a housing unit in the community, also known as Tenant Based Rental Assistance.
- **Site-based RRH** is immediate housing in a semi-independent and supportive setting. This housing model will allow a young person to receive intensive case management services in a supportive environment before entering a rental unit on their own. We do not anticipate buying property for the site-based housing component, but will utilize current site-based buildings or, based on need, will master lease multi-unit buildings to create semi-independent living. While young people would be able to live permanently in the site-based unit, they will be afforded the opportunity to transition into a scattered site unit without program disruption or service changes. We seek to enable a seamless transition within the scope of progressive engagement housing. This site-based model will allow subpopulations within the 18-24-year-old population to create community living environments, if desired.

Rapid Re-housing, as the initial housing intervention strategy, would have several exit destinations accessible when stability has been established and a young person is ready to exit the program. For example, destinations may include:

1. **Market-rate, affordable housing.** The Youth Dedicated Service Team will continue to provide supportive services through Aftercare support.
2. **Connection to site-based housing** or a **Housing Choice Voucher** through the local Public Housing Authority, Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA). The Youth Dedicated Service Team will continue to provide supportive services through Aftercare support. Cincinnati has secured two CMHA preferences for Housing Choice Vouchers:
   a. Homeless Preference – Strategies to End Homelessness has partnered with CMHA to implement and expand policies that prioritize homeless households and families to receive Housing Choice Vouchers (also known as Section 8) to increase their long-term stability. The community has secured 500 homeless preference vouchers for which young people graduating from a YHDP project will be eligible.
   b. Foster Care preference – Lighthouse Youth and Family Services has partnered with CMHA to administer local preference for youth aging out of foster care for Housing Choice Vouchers. Thirty preferences have been secured for youth who have aged out of foster care.
3. **Permanent Supportive Housing** *(PSH)* refers to permanent housing in which supportive services are provided to enable homeless young people with a disability to live independently. This long-term supportive housing will be available to young people who are identified as needing supportive housing for an undetermined length of time. If a young person transitions to PSH, supportive services will continue through the Youth Dedicated Service team.

Additional Housing Options
The new **Sheakley Center for Youth** (replacing the current facility) is a four-story complex that will offer emergency shelter and long-term housing to homeless youth. The facility includes 36 beds to be used as emergency shelter, and 39 apartment units for long-term supportive housing. The new center will increase the community's youth dedicated shelter capacity by 8 beds and reduce the residents' length of stay by moving them out of the shelter and into safe

and affordable housing more quickly, thereby enabling Lighthouse to provide services for an increased number of homeless youth. Residents will access 24/7 onsite services such as case management, targeted life skills training, mental health care, specialized case management for youth experiencing mental health or substance abuse issues, and referrals to community partners for specialized services. With its wide range of onsite services tailored to the needs of its residents, the new Sheakley Center for Youth will ultimately result in transformed individuals who successfully transition to independent adulthood, are engaged in positive living, and are contributing to the community. Construction of the new building began in July 2016. It is expected to be completed in December 2017 and open for services in January 2018.

Host Homes - Expansion of the Host Home program, as described under Homelessness Prevention on page 25 to include housing opportunities for literally homeless youth.

LGBTQ Youth BrightLife – Lighthouse Youth & Family Services is currently administering a pilot project called BrightLife, funded by the Department of Health and Human Services. The project has been very successful and has called attention to a significant need in housing 18-21-year-olds who identify as LGBTQ, directly from the street. LGBTQ youth are often unwilling to go to shelter for fear of discrimination (real or perceived) or due to concern about leaving partners or important connections behind. Through progressive engagement housing, the community will continue to focus on this population and ensure that street outreach teams are connecting with the Coordinated Entry system to get LGBTQ youth off the street and into housing as quickly as possible. Additionally, shared housing will enable young people to live with chosen families and create safe and appropriate housing options.

Housing Strategies

Shared Housing - Shared housing is an opportunity to innovate in the administration of rental assistance. Currently, most youth receiving rental assistance live on their own. By implementing systemic shared housing options, youth can share an apartment with a fellow formerly-homeless youth or another individual of their choosing. Implementation of this initiative will reduce living expenses for the young person, reduce rental assistance costs, ease the transition into housing for youth accustomed to living with others, and ensure that youth are quickly housed in a community with limited affordable housing options.

Cincinnati/Hamilton County anticipates learning from other communities that have successfully implemented shared housing and envisions organic roommate matches as well as the creation of a database that helps identify personal goals, challenges, and values. This will ensure that youth have self-determination in selecting a roommate. Case managers will be available to establish healthy boundaries, work through challenges, and help minimize conflict. Shared housing utilization will be tracked to determine best practice and the contribution of roommates in creating more sustainable housing.

Housing Specialists and Landlord Connections – An infrastructure investment in landlord relationships must be prioritized in order to best utilize increased housing opportunities. Youth-focused housing specialists will be added to the system to focus on housing specific tasks, such as:

- recruiting new landlords
- building and maintaining positive relationships with landlords
- acting as first responders when landlord issues arise
- completing all housing inspections and fair market rent tests
- maintaining a strong understanding of tenant rights

- helping youth understand their rights and responsibilities as tenants
- navigating the lease signing and move-in experience

All youth who are matched to housing through the Coordinated Entry System will receive assistance from a Youth Housing Specialist. The additional Youth Housing Specialists will enable the Youth Dedicated Service Team to focus on specialized case management needs beyond housing and cultivate additional housing expertise in the system.

In collaboration with Strategies to End Homelessness, Housing Specialists will utilize *RentConnect.org* to manage relationships with landlords and property management companies. By housing this information in an existing database, a system of youth-friendly landlords will be created to quickly house young people in an environment that meets their housing needs. This team's work will ensure that the length of time youth are homeless will be shortened, evictions will decrease, referral-to-housed timeframes will be shortened, and strong partnerships with local landlords will be nurtured. Youth Housing Specialists are a necessary innovation to achieve the goals set forth in the plan.

Subpopulations

Parenting and Pregnant Youth —The needs of pregnant or parenting youth are similar between those at risk of homelessness and those experiencing literal homelessness. Prioritizing necessary prenatal care and fostering nurturing environments to raise healthy children is challenging when the parents are in the midst of a housing crisis. Young pregnant or parenting youth who are facing homelessness typically bounce from place to place with no consistent prenatal care, proper nutrition, basic child care education, or knowledge of how to address these needs. In 2016, there were 133 pregnant and/or parenting youth recorded as literally homeless in the HMIS. Currently, the community does not have many resources to assist parenting and pregnant youth who are at-risk of homelessness and data on this subpopulation is not available.

Key partners that serve pregnant and parenting youth experiencing homelessness and at-risk of homelessness participated in writing the plan and developing key strategies. They did not identify any needs that differ between the at-risk population and the literal homelessness population of pregnant and parenting youth. With increased resources and a focus on preventing homelessness, the community will continue to learn about the needs of young parents and pregnant women who are at-risk of homelessness and will shift strategies as identified by the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) team. However, we do believe that increased prevention, housing, and service strategies for this subpopulation will result in young parents who are stably housed having a better chance of nurturing healthy babies, creating supportive homes for their family to grow, and ending the cycle homelessness.

The strategies listed in this section are specific to what we know about the young parents and pregnant women experiencing literal homelessness. While we believe that most strategies will also be applicable to those at-risk of homelessness, it has been identified that a stronger emphasis on reconnection with self-identified supports may result in more immediate housing stability for young parents and pregnant women who are at risk of homelessness.

The Youth Dedicated Service Team will help create the village it takes to raise a child. Young parents need appropriate housing and need to be matched with a service team that understands the needs of both the parents and children. The service team will assist youth in identifying safe and appropriate housing and initiate a youth-driven service plan. Pregnant and parenting homeless youth require specialized supports, which are particularly critical for homeless youth who are pregnant or parenting for the first time. Pregnant and parenting youth will receive intensive case management that includes a focus on prenatal and infant health, postpartum depression

education and screenings, family planning education, support in finding and accessing safe child care, education about FMLA protections, assisted access to health insurance for parent and child, etc. These services will accompany housing case management and will be available through the Youth Dedicated Service Team and through direct community referrals.

With regards to education, employment, and social/emotional needs, at-risk and homeless pregnant and parenting youth experience many of the same strengths, challenges, and needs as their non-pregnant and parenting peers. However, pregnancy and parenting status may complicate youth access to education, housing and employment. Strong connections to childcare are a priority for homeless youth serving agencies so that these young people can have needed respite, attend job interviews and pursue education. Furthermore, this subpopulation may require additional support in the areas of health and housing procurement. The Youth Dedicated Service Team will facilitate access to housing for homeless and at-risk of homeless parents with young children and provide parenting youth with additional social and emotional support to navigate co-parenting and other family related issues, which may differ in nature and complexity from the needs of non-parenting youth.

With individualized and intensive services available to pregnant and parenting youth, housing stability will increase, returns to homelessness will decrease, and employment, mainstream benefits, and overall income performance outcomes for this population will improve. And, by partnering with community experts on prenatal care, home visitation, and child development, as well as organizations focused on reducing infant and maternal mortality, we will create a system of care that will enable families to find stability and success in the future.

LGBTQ Youth – In 2014, Cincinnati/Hamilton County, Ohio was one of two communities in the country selected to participate in the LGBTQ Youth Homelessness Prevention Initiative, led by HUD. LGBTQ youth are dramatically overrepresented in the population of youth experiencing homelessness, yet there are far too few systems and services designed to meet their needs. The Safe and Supported Initiative consisted of developing and implementing a plan for LGBTQ youth homelessness prevention and intervention. The goals were to learn more about preventing homelessness for LGBTQ youth and intervening early to prevent chronic homelessness among LGBTQ youth.

We are continuously working to end LGBTQ youth homelessness in Hamilton County, Ohio by 2020. Several programs were developed to achieve this goal:
- The Host Home Program: This program matches LGBTQ young adults at risk of homelessness with caring hosts in the community, linking youth not only with housing and food but also mentorship. We seek to expand the Host Home program through YHDP (see page 25).
- BrightLife: This program transfers homeless LGBTQ youth directly from the streets into housing, bypassing emergency shelter and ensuring a quick return to stability. We seek to expand the BrightLife program through YHDP (see page 27).
- Cultural Competency Training: Working with local organizations to provide free LGBTQ cultural competency training and technical assistance to ensure that wherever youth go in Cincinnati, they'll receive affirming care. We seek to expand this program through the Purple Umbrella Project (see page 35).
- Resource Guides & UPZ App: Publishing guides for youth and professionals to help make finding affirming care a non-issue as well as developing the UPZ mobile app to connect currently homeless youth to care.

Youth Aging Out of Foster Care – Youth with experience in the child welfare system and those aging out of the system are at a high risk of experiencing homelessness. Through the HHS funded Youth At Risk of Homelessness

Planning and Implementation grant, locally named Watch Me Rise, we have learned more about their needs. The experiees and factors related to currently homeless youth with a child welfare history can provide important insights into improving services and YHDP strategies. Therefore, we examined data of the 491 youth 18-21 years of age who received homeless services in Hamilton County, Ohio during February 1, 2014-January 31, 2015. Of the 130 youth (26%) who reported past experience with child welfare and/or foster care:

- 47% reported a pre-existing mental health diagnosis
- 45% reported spending more than five years in foster care
- 44% reported aging out of the foster care system

Data matching between Lighthouse and State Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) included 328 youth 18-21 years of age (January 2010-March 2015), with 166 (51%) identified as homeless. Of the 166 homeless youth:

- 75% had an open case with the child welfare system within their first three years of life
- The average number of years between first open case and first substitute care was highest for 14-year-olds (11.5 years) and decreased with age with the lowest being 17 year olds (9.6 years)
- Youth who entered care between 14 and 17 years of age experienced 2 to 3.5 placements every year

Cincinnati Public Schools data also indicated that the absenteeism of foster care youth ages 16-17 years was two times higher than youth not in foster care. Furthermore, in study interviews youth reported aging out of the child welfare system with insufficient skills, supports, and connections necessary to live a healthy and productive life.

Using this information, we are currently implementing a specific intervention called High Fidelity Wraparound and determining if it is making a positive difference in the lives of youth in foster care and homeless youth with a history of foster care. Information learned will be applied to YHDP.

Other strategies to support this population include implementation of the state-wide Foster Care to 21 program, called Bridges, beginning in early 2018. This program will provide housing and living stipends for youth ages 18-21 who emancipated from the child welfare system in Ohio. The Youth Dedicated Service Team will work closely with Bridges providers to identify emancipated youth, and help youth meet and maintain the eligibility requirements (participation in work or education activities) and gain access to this new community resource.

Finally, staff members from Hamilton County Child Welfare will be participating in the Youth By-Name list reviews, the Youth Workgroup and the YHDP Policy team to enhance connections and services for homeless youth with foster care histories. The YHDP Policy team will identify ways to improve life skills, social-emotional well-being and permanent connections for youth aging out of care to prepare them for a life of housing stability and success.

Victims of Trafficking – Cincinnati is a major hub for human trafficking. Survivors of human trafficking need services specifically tailored to their trauma: a safe place to re-stabilize prior to living on their own, as well as assistance achieving housing stability, overcoming trauma, managing substance use, setting healthy boundaries, returning to school and/or work, and improving physical and mental health. Housing and services will be available to survivors of trafficking of any gender through a strong partnership with the Salvation Army.

The current idea to best serve this population is to create a housing "campus" for victims of human trafficking, including a site-based housing facility with scattered site apartments in close vicinity allowing for re-stabilization and access to specialized care. This type of campus environment will provide stability and security so survivors of trafficking can recover without safety concerns. Before moving forward with the creation of this site-based facility,

it is recommended that the Salvation Army partner with YWCA of Greater Cincinnati to house victims of human trafficking that fear for their safety in the community's existing Domestic Violence shelter. The community will collect data on how many young people need this service and determine an appropriate size and location for a safe place for victims of human trafficking.

Juvenile Justice Involvement – The intersections between juvenile justice and homelessness are many and reinforcing. Homelessness can lead to juvenile justice involvement through the pathways of truancy, traumatic stress and aggression, survival motivated theft and sexual activity, and trespassing; juvenile justice involvement may also further exacerbate or destabilize youth living situations. The Hamilton County Juvenile Court, The Children's Law Center and other Justice related partners are committed to specific strategies to support this population of youth.

The Youth Workgroup affirms that confinement is not a solution or alternative to lack of housing for young people. We are committed to implementing strategies for the two groups of youth most impacted by the justice and homelessness systems:

1. Youth who end up in the Juvenile Justice system because they are homeless or facing homelessness (e.g. youth who commit homelessness-related crimes – curfew, survival theft and sexual activity, truancy, etc.) and
2. Youth who face homelessness upon release from the Juvenile Justice system (e.g. family relationship deteriorated during pendency of case, family has become homeless while in placement, family lives in housing situation to which youth cannot return due to criminal record).

Strategies for addressing the unique challenges of youth experiencing both homelessness and juvenile justice involvement include bolstering partnerships and transparency between the juvenile justice, child welfare, and homeless serving systems in greater Cincinnati. Anecdotally, many youth remain in the detention center because they lack a suitable placement. This indicates a need to begin collaborative housing and placement planning long before discharge from juvenile justice custody, placement, and supervision. This issue will be further addressed by strengthening communication and linkages between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems as well as prioritizing and initiating housing plans upon entry into the juvenile justice system. YHDP partner organization, the Children's Law Center, is leading conversations with key stakeholders on this topic to improve housing outcomes for this population of youth. Additionally, the lack of suitable placements illustrates the need for a community-wide ending youth homelessness data dashboard assessing housing outcomes according to youth involvement with the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. Reviewing this data on a regular basis will enable quick shifts in strategies to improve strategies as needed.

Primary strategies for addressing the intersection of juvenile justice and homelessness center on improving data quality and transparency in the community. Current data gaps include limited assessment of homelessness upon entry into the justice system. This will be addressed by strengthening relationships with the Juvenile Court and adding housing stability related items to their intake assessment. Again, limited data linkages between systems can be overcome through expansion of the data dashboard to include juvenile justice data in addition to the HMIS data. This inclusion will allow for better assessment of disparities in housing-related outcomes associated with juvenile justice involvement, and potential racial disparities in arrest and diversion. Development of a public-facing data dashboard will provide an opportunity for community-wide reflection, accountability, and advocacy for housing outcomes of justice-involved youth.

Existing community partnerships will support strategies in this area. Hamilton County Juvenile Court has increased diversions by 17% over the past ten years; in 2016, Juvenile Court diverted 483 youth from detention to shelter placement with Lighthouse Youth and Family Services. Meanwhile, Hamilton County Jobs and Family Services, in partnership with Cincinnati Public Schools, reported a 100% graduation rate for the 2015/2016 school year for students enrolled in Kids in School Rule, a program which supports CPS students in the custody or under supervision of Hamilton County Job & Family Services.

As part of Cincinnati/Hamilton County's YHDP policy agenda, the community has identified criminal charges that impact homeless youth. Advocacy efforts are moving forward on these topics to limit the criminal impact of homelessness both locally and statewide. The Youth Dedicated Services Team will be trained to identify and meet the specific needs of young people with justice involvement and assist with appropriate system navigation strategies, case planning and identified housing needs.

Minors – Project Connect, a McKinney-Vento funded program, provides services to homeless youth in Cincinnati Public Schools. Currently, data collection, data sharing, and linkages between Project Connect and the greater homeless serving system are incomplete, making it difficult to accurately measure and adequately serve unaccompanied homeless minors, many of whom may be hesitant to seek services at a homeless shelter. Our team will work to improve data and service linkages between local school systems and the homeless serving system, emphasizing improved communication and identification of youth between systems to ensure appropriate system involvement, placements, and supports. A representative from Project Connect is actively participating on the By-Name List Implementation team to develop a strategy for including minor students on the list.

Increased Data Sharing Capabilities

The Homeless Service System will not end youth homelessness in isolation. Data sharing between systems will be necessary to identify trends, evaluate successes, and make improvements.

- Phase 1- Implementation of a youth by-name list to enable service providers to identify and assist young people with appropriate interventions. The by-name list will inform the gaps analysis and allow the system to make real time adjustments to program design throughout the duration of YHDP implementation. We are working with partners to include minor students experiencing homelessness and youth exiting child welfare and juvenile justice systems on the list, potentially in the "be on the lookout for" category, to increase focus on their needs and prevent homelessness.
- Phase 2 – Implementation of a data sharing software connecting HMIS data with other systems including Child Welfare, Juvenile Justice, medical, and education.
- Phase 3 –Use system-wide, community level data for predictive analytics.

HUD funding may be utilized to make the initial investment in data software for phase two of the data sharing plan.

Investment in Community Infrastructure

As mentioned above, Cincinnati is rich in resources and with the addition of increased funding for housing and services, we believe that significant progress can be made toward ending youth homelessness. The community will continue to build partnerships and build infrastructure to better support youth in the homeless system, but we anticipate that some of these systems and partnerships may require initial investments to see progress. The plan calls for $50,000 in flexible funding to be used throughout implementation of the demonstration in order to fund initiatives that will create stronger infrastructure and significant impact on the lives of young people experiencing homelessness. Before funding is expended from the flexible funding pool, project descriptions will be reviewed and evaluated by the CoC Youth Workgroup and Unified Funding Agency. Examples of possible expenses could be:

funding for Trauma-Informed Care or Positive Youth Development training, HMIS changes for data collection, minor changes to existing safe shelter and street outreach programs, or costs associated with implementing new transportation innovations.

Project Descriptions: System Improvements to Existing Models

Safe Shelter/Street Outreach

Develop a youth-specific zero-barrier Safe Bed and Step-Up model, staffed by culturally competent, affirming, youth-centered professionals. The safe shelter model allows for certain shelter beds to be used for clients who are not yet ready to engage in services. These beds are low demand, designed to help even the hardest to serve clients have a safe place to sleep. Engagement services are still provided to the clients with a goal of preparing each client to "step-up" to work with case management and find stable housing.   This addition to our community would enhance the ability of the Street Outreach team to engage homeless youth on the street because they would be able to offer immediate shelter in a youth-specific building. This would remove the barrier of youth staying with older adults in the general shelter, where youth often feel unsafe.

Additionally, reconnection efforts will be added to the front door of each walk-in shelter to ensure that all episodes of homelessness that can be avoided, are avoided. All shelter intake workers will be trained on reconnection, and young people who are diverted from shelter through this process will receive on-going case management through the shelter or the Youth Dedicated Service Team as needed.

Cultural Competency, Trauma-Informed Care, Positive Youth Development, and Housing First Training

This plan involves youth cultural competency training for providers of all services that interact with homeless youth. This will create an open, affirming, and empathetic community wherein youth can access a variety of services without misunderstanding, judgment, or condemnation. Homeless youth have unique needs and experiences, and a community that is thoroughly trained in trauma-informed care, LGBTQ cultural competence, human trafficking awareness, and other facets of homeless youth cultural competence will be able to better serve its most vulnerable clients. Training in Housing First principles will be critical for YHDP partners involved in implementation that may not be familiar with the concept. Providing permanent housing without barriers or preconditions requires a specific approach to relationships between staff and young adults and these skills will be taught and reinforced for all staff members working with youth in YHDP projects.

One portion of the curriculum will be Moving the Margins—a curriculum focused on providing better services for LGBTQ youth. The Trauma-Informed Care Curriculum will be selected with input from the Tri-State Trauma Network, of which many CoC agencies are members. Additional youth cultural competency training and information will be selected and may include trainers from Youth at the Center. Housing First Training will be incorporated into the CoC training calendar and YHDP planning funds will support staff time for curriculum selection and trainings.

Youth Specific Coordinated Entry

Coordinated Entry increases community efficiency by standardizing access to homeless services and coordinating program referrals. Coordinated Entry assists the community to prevent and end youth homelessness by decreasing the length of time spent homeless for the most vulnerable populations and reducing returns to homelessness. Participants will quickly access appropriate services to address housing crises through a right-sized, well-coordinated agency network. The model, while working well for the system, needs improvements to better serve young people.

The Central Access Point (CAP) is a centralized intake system for families and individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of becoming homeless. CAP is managed by Strategies to End Homelessness (STEH), and is the main front door to the Coordinated Entry System. The plan calls for CAP to continue to be the front door of the system and screen for homelessness prevention and emergency shelter needs. However, CAP will increase their services to provide reconnection support over the phone and to make immediate connections between youth at risk of homelessness and the Youth Dedicated Service Team.

Reconnection, as described above, will be established as a system wide intervention utilized to support young people before they enter the homeless service system.

Cincinnati/Hamilton County will continue to use the Transition Age Youth VI-SPDAT, but will incorporate the measure as the second phase of an assessment, adopting and implementing a new preliminary tool (which has yet to be determined). The introduction of a new tool will facilitate preliminary conversations with youth at risk of homelessness and literally homeless youth regarding their immediate needs. Adding an additional assessment will ensure that young people are given an opportunity to self-resolve their homelessness while allowing our system to provide appropriate financial assistance to those who need it.

This system will allow the coordinated entry team to match housing needs with the appropriate interventions. They will then be able to offer reconnection services, rental assistance and services through the shelter diversion program, or housing through the progressive engagement model for young people who are literally homeless.

The community will create a Continuous Quality Improvement plan to routinely assess the fidelity of the Coordinated Entry system and the validity of the chosen assessment tools.

Project Descriptions: Partnership Opportunities

Scholar House

Cincinnati Scholar House is a transitional learning-living program that will equip low-income single parents with the support they need to complete a post-secondary degree and improve their work prospects. The Scholar House concept, which began in Lexington, Kentucky, has grown to include ten additional locations in Kentucky and Ohio. It is a proven model that will assist parents while they earn their degree and work their way towards self-sufficiency, allowing their children to simultaneously receive a quality introduction to learning. This Project will be funded by external funds which have been awarded. Construction will begin in April 2018 with the opening expected in Fall 2019.

In order to participate in the program, Cincinnati Scholar House applicants must be enrolled in full-time coursework at a postsecondary education institution (University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati State, Xavier University, or equivalent). While enrolled in coursework, families will be offered the following support:
- Housing: The project proposes the new construction of 44 units, comprised of 32 two-bedroom units and 12 three-bedroom units to best accommodate families. Subsidies will ensure that all families will pay only 30% of their incomes towards rent and utilities.
- On-Site Early Care and Education Center: Cincinnati Union Bethel (CUB) has been delivering high-quality early care and education for decades, and will operate a center sized to accommodate the children living at Scholar House. Children from 6 weeks to school-age will receive education and care in an enriching environment while the parent is in school.
- Adult Support Program: In a program coordinated by CUB, parents will be connected with economic supports including a work study program, financial aid, mentoring, and other workshops that will assist

parents in their roles as students, heads of household, and future employees. The project will include several rooms where these programs are offered. These services will be bundled and offered by a common staff to ensure they are specific to each family's needs. Residents will also receive support from their neighbors, who in community are taking a journey to self-sufficiency and improved economic prospects.

The criteria to enter the program are:
- Already have a high school diploma or GED
- Be at least 18 years of age
- Be a single-parent with primary custody of child/children
- Must be a full-time student
- Must maintain a 2.0 GPA
- Children under the age of 5 must be enrolled in the Early Care and Education program

Purple Umbrella

The Purple Umbrella Project was implemented in Summit County, OH, in order to identify and highlight safe spaces that are "committed to assisting emancipating youth in several key areas: employment, education, housing, transportation, legal issues, and health and mental health services." By implementing this project in Cincinnati, we can create a community of goodwill toward former foster youth, emancipated, and homeless youth. By displaying a purple umbrella sticker in the front window, a business or organization communicates that they are willing to serve and/or employ emancipated and homeless youth, or connect them with resources. Purple Umbrella businesses and organizations may also provide some small comforts to homeless and emancipated youth: a place to charge a cell phone, free Wi-Fi, or a clean restroom to use.

In order for businesses and organizations to display the purple umbrella sticker, a representative from the business or organization must attend an in-depth orientation and ongoing training in trauma-informed care, cultural competency and positive youth development in order to provide compassionate service and understand the unique needs and experiences of homeless and emancipated youth. The Purple Umbrella Project transforms businesses into community partners, increases community awareness of homeless and emancipated youth experiences, and creates goodwill toward homeless and emancipated youth.

Employment

In July 2016, the Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program (CCMEP) became the statewide operational framework used to deliver integrated, comprehensive case management and employment services to youth across Ohio's 88 counties. CCMEP's goal is to improve employment and educational outcomes for our young adults by offering services and supports needed to address barriers to employment. Core services include:
- Educational supports to obtain high school diploma or GED
- Job and occupational skills training
- Paid and unpaid work experience
- Financial literacy
- Supportive services, including access to child care, transportation and counseling

HCJFS is working with current WIOA (Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act) Youth Providers, Ohio Works First Providers and CCMEP Provider, Talbert House to develop policies and procedures needed to implement the program.

Education

Educational entities from elementary schools to post-secondary institutions are key partners in identifying and supporting youth experiencing homelessness. Project Connect, a McKinney-Vento funded program, provides services and supports not only to homeless youth, but also homeless youth with children in Cincinnati Public Schools. Integrating Project Connect into our data sharing plan will allow the CoC more effectively identify and serve homeless and at-risk youth. We will explore options for improving connections with the Project Connect team members and expanding their reach.

Over the past decade, Cincinnati Public Schools has invested in the development of Community Learning Centers (CLCs) in many of its schools. Each Community Learning Center is supported by a full-time Resource Coordinator, who is responsible for recruiting, coordinating, managing, and aligning community partnerships in order to meet identified school and community needs. CLCs incorporate co-located school based mental health services as well as recreational and educational opportunities. This infrastructure, if fully leveraged, has the potential to allow our community to better identify, follow, and support homeless youth in their educational home. We will explore possibilities for partnership, training, and improved linkage to services, as the support and buy in of the Community Learning Center initiative could significantly improve the quality and thoroughness of data collection and management between systems, giving our community clearer and fuller insight into the identities and experiences of homeless youth. In particular, partnering with Community Learning Centers could assist our community in developing best practices for identifying youth who are couch surfing or otherwise at imminent risk of homelessness.

Additional relationships will be built with key educational institutions that serve homeless youth such as local community colleges, colleges and universities and organizations on these campuses, such as the LGBTQ resource center at the University of Cincinnati.

CoC Matching Funds Partnerships

New relationships are being pursued to both guarantee required CoC match for YHDP projects, and strengthen services for young people in our community. The Strategic Planning committee has identified several partnerships that could result in significant matching funds to expand the reach of YHDP projects. It has been identified that local Emergency Departments are not consistently able to determine housing vulnerabilities in young people accessing their services. An innovation that was discussed with one medical facility was the implementation of a screening tool, consistent with the phase 1 tool described in the Youth Specific Coordinated Entry description on page 33. Additionally, the establishment of data sharing agreements with hospitals providing emergency care will allow us to determine the amount of funds that are spent on homeless youth each year, quantifying the value of services already being provided to this population and possibly identifying interventions to help decrease these costs to the community.

Match discussions will continue throughout the planning and implementation of the demonstration projects with a goal of fully integrating services into the system.

Policy Agenda

Through a literature review we defined the following risk factors as major contributors to youth homelessness. These factors are visualized in Figure 1. The policy agenda is centered around these factors and serves to create opportunities for young people, and to remove barriers. Community partners are collaborating to share information, build relationships and to leverage resources to advance shared policy goals.

Currently, the top policy areas of focus include:

1. Affordable Housing
2. Eviction Prevention
3. Mental Health Care
4. Living Wage
5. Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice policies and practices
6. Decriminalizing homelessness

KEYS Project List – Not to be considered final, information is subject to change

Project Title	Host Organization	Timeline &Status	Intervention Area	Goal Areas & Community Goals	Target Population/ HUD Eligibility	# of units/beds/ households	YAC Reviewed/ Vetted
CoC Planning & Cultural Competency	STEH	in operation with yr. 1 HUD funding awarded 12/1/2017	Coordination & Training	Planning, Community Goal: 5	N/A	N/A	YES
Youth Dedicated Service Team (includes Housing Specialists)	TBD	estimated to begin 7/1/2018	Housing Services	SH, PC, EE, SE Community Goal: 1,2,3,4,5	Cat. 1, 4	600 households	YES
Progressive Engagement Housing	TBD	estimated to begin 7/1/2018	Permanent Housing	SH, PC, EE, SE Community Goal: 1,2,3,4,5	Cat. 1, 2, 3,4	600 units	YES
Homelessness Prevention (Services & Housing Assistance)	TBD	estimated to begin 7/1/2018	Services & Housing	SH, PC, EE, SE Community Goal: 1	Cat. 2,3	525 households 250 units	YES
Data Sharing Capabilities	STEH	early development	Technical Support	Technical Support Community Goal: 5	N/A	N/A	not final
Flexible Funding to Support Community Infrastructure	STEH	under development	Services & Housing	SH, PC, EE, SE Community Goal: 1,2,3,4,5	Cat. 1, 2, 3,4	N/A	YES
Youth Specific Emergency Shelter (Sheakley Center)	LYFS	in operation with program changes under development	Shelter	SH Community Goal: 2,3	Cat.1	36 beds 600 individuals	YES
Youth Specific Street Outreach	LYFS	in operation	Street Outreach	SH Community Goal: 2,3	Cat. 1,2,3	208 households	YES
Purple Umbrella Campaign	TBD	under development	Education /Employment	EE Community Goal: 4,5	Cat. 1,2,3,4	N/A	YES
Transportation Initiative	TBD	early development	Services	EE Community Goal: 4,5	Cat.1,2,3,4	N/A	not final
Creation of mobile application for increased system navigation	TBD	not started	Services	SH Community Goal: 1,2,3,4,5	Cat. 1	N/A	not final
Scholar House (Community Project)	Model Group	establishing YHDP partnership	Permanent Housing	SH, PC, EE, SE Community Goal: 2,3,4,5	Cat. 1,2,3,4	44 units	No
Housing Campus for Victims of Human Trafficking	TBD	determining need	Stable Housing	SH, PC, Community Goal: 2,3,4,5	Cat. 1,4	6 units 16 beds	No
Site-Based Housing for Pregnant Youth	TBD	determining need	Services & Housing	SH, PC Community Goal: 2,3,4,5	Cat. 1,2,3,4	20 units	No

(rows in last three: KEYS Additional Project & Partner)

Goal Areas: SH – Stable Housing, PC – Permanent Connections, EE – Education/Employment, SE – Social/Emotional Well-Being

HUD Homeless Definitions: Cat 1 – Literally Homeless, Cat 2 – Imminent Risk of Homelessness, Cat 3 – Homeless under Federal Statutes, Cat 4 – Fleeing DV

Community Goals: 1. Prevent homelessness before it occurs, 2. Provide safe and appropriate shelter and services to all willing youth who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness, 3. Reduce the length of homeless episodes experienced by youth, 4. Ensure that youth exiting the homeless system have supports they need to remain housed, 5. Encourage innovation, system change and sustainability within the CoC and larger community.

KEYS Project List Continued – Not to be considered final, information is subject to change

Project Title	Total Budget Amount	Primary Funding Amount	Primary Funding Source	Secondary Funding Amount	Secondary Funding Source	Project Year 1 HUD-YHDP Ask	Project Year 2 HUD-YHDP Ask	TOTAL PROJECT COSTS 2 Years
CoC Planning & Cultural Competency	$140,415	$140,415	HUD - YHDP	$14,587	Private	$140,415	$140,415	$280,830
Youth Dedicated Service Team (includes Housing Specialists)	$650,000	$522,233	HUD - YHDP	$127,767	HUD - COC current	$522,233	$522,233	$1,044,466
Progressive Engagement Housing	$1,047,093	$640,352	HUD - YHDP	$406,741	HUD - COC current	$640,352	$640,352	$1,280,704
Homelessness Prevention (Services & Housing Assistance)	$700,000	$597,000	HUD - YHDP	$103,000	ESG/Private	$597,000	$597,000	$1,194,000
Data Sharing Capabilities	$250,000	TBD	TBD	N/A	N/A	$0	$0	$425,000
Flexible Funding to Support Community Infrastructure	$50,000	$50,000	TBD	$0	N/A	$0	$0	$100,000
Youth Specific Emergency Shelter (Sheakley Center)	$1,300,000	$1,300,000	Public/Private	N/A	N/A	$0	$0	$2,600,000
Youth Specific Street Outreach	$300,000	$300,000	HUD/HHS/ Private	N/A	N/A	$0	$0	$300,000
Purple Umbrella Campaign	$10,000	$10,000	TBD	N/A	N/A	$0	$0	$10,000
Transportation Initiative	$327,600	$327,600	TBD	N/A	N/A	$0	$0	$655,200
Creation of mobile application for increased system navigation	$50,000	$50,000	TBD	N/A	N/A	$0	$0	$50,000
KEYS ESTIMATED YEAR 1 BUDGET	$4,825,108					$1,900,000	$1,900,000	$7,940,200
Scholar House (Community Project)	$9,100,000	$9,100,000	Private-Public	N/A	N/A	$0	$0	$9,100,000
Housing Campus for Victims of Human Trafficking	$300,000	TBD	TBD	NA	NA	$0	$0	$300,000
Site-Based Housing for Pregnant Youth	$800,000	TBD	TBD	NA	NA	$0	$0	$1,200,000

Figure 1: Risk Factors contributing to Youth Homelessness

KEYS To A Future Without Youth Homelessness – Cincinnati/Hamilton County, OH
HUD Approved on 01.05.18

Section IV. KEYS To A Future Without Youth Homelessness - YHDP Next Steps

Our next steps for Implementation include:

- Convene monthly Youth Advisory Council meetings and hire Youth Leads to engage more youth in the process and incorporate their input in YHDP goals and implementation
- Host a full CoC meeting to ensure all community partners are aware of the goals and implementation plan
- Develop the Projects: Refine start-up and ongoing operational costs, identify potential funders and secure commitments for accountability, submit individual project applications to HUD, facilitate RFP processes
- Select necessary Youth Training Curriculums (Cultural Competency, Positive Youth Development, Trauma Informed Care) and create a training schedule
- Finalize the implementation plan, including descriptions and goals for all implementation teams
- Continue Data analysis to inform CQI and finalize data elements for the Ending Youth Homelessness Data Dashboard
- Continue to explore best practices for education and employment initiatives
- Participate in YHDP activities including community calls, working with TA providers and hosting the 2-day training and site-visit

Section V: Support from Key Partners

We have full support for this plan from our Strategic Planning Committee members. Please see the Appendix for the full list of Strategic Planning Committee members and signature pages from the following key partners:
- Lighthouse Youth Advisory Council
- Strategies to End Homelessness, Unified Funding Agency
- Lighthouse Youth and Family Services, Lead YHDP Agency
- Hamilton County Job and Family Services (Child Welfare)
- City of Cincinnati

Conclusion

This plan creates a system where all youth are supported in becoming their own heroes and leaders in the redirection of their lives. The words of Tee Jai (below) will echo in the community as we implement the innovations in this plan to effectively and efficiently end youth homelessness in Cincinnati and Hamilton County.

> *What I… was*
> *11 yrs old who had become content of bein' alone. So used to having a new mom and dad, used to movin' to another house that'll never be a place that will become home.*
>
> *Who was I…*
> *A young boy that walked around with a smile on his face, repeatedly saying "it's a temporary home, this is not where I belong, it's just a stop on the way to a dream I have."*
>
> *A dream I have…*
> *Having a family of my own, raising it the way my family wasn't, to find the special someone [to] heal my broken soul, support me when things spiral outta control, a hero to run to when I had broken faith, never realize that I was that person who was the hero.*
> *- Tee Jai, Lighthouse Youth Advisory Council Member*

Appendix

HUD – System Connections Chart (threshold 2 requirement)

	Partners	Partner's name	Involvement	Yes	Role/Responsibilities
a.	CoC Program Recipients*	Strategies to End homelessness	Leadership team	X	Applicant, UFA.
b.	Youth Advisory Boards*	YAB	Leadership team	X	Guide decision-making process, approve Coordinated Community Plan
c.	Local and State Government*	Office of the Mayor	CoC Youth Workgroup	X	Large-scale approval and buy-in of the CCP
d.	Public Child Welfare Agencies*	Hamilton County Job and Family Services	CoC Youth Workgroup	X	Lend child welfare expertise and create intimate partnerships with HCJFS
e.	ESG Program Recipients	Shelterhouse Volunteer Group	CoC Youth Workgroup	X	Youth Service Team Subcommittee
f.	Local and State Law Enforcement and Judges	Cincinnati Police Department	Community Partner	X	Partner in development of updated policies regarding police interactions with homeless youth; Outreach advocacy
g.	Early Childhood Development and Child Care providers	4C	Community Partner	X	Provides early childhood education for homeless children
h.	Local and State Educational Agencies	Cincinnati Public Schools	CoC Youth Workgroup	X	Identify, educate, and advocate for accompanied and unaccompanied homeless children; project development
i.	Runaway and Homeless Youth Program Providers	Lighthouse Youth and Family Services	Leadership team	X	RHY provider, Youth Advisory Board facilitator, youth-specific service provider
j.	Non-Profit Youth Organizations	Easter Seals	Community Partner	X	Community link to non-profit youth services
k.	Juvenile and Adult Corrections and Probation	Children's Law Center, Bryan Bell (Juvenile Justice)	CoC Youth Workgroup	X	Advocates on behalf of homeless youth who have been involved with juvenile justice and corrections.
	Juvenile and Adult Corrections and Probation	Hamilton County Office of Reentry	Community Partner	X	Partner in connecting returning citizens to homeless and job services
l.	Health, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse Agencies	Cincinnati Children's Hospital	Community Partner	X	Data and statistics sharing; identify and refer homeless youth seeking treatment

	Partners	Partner's name	Involvement	Yes	Role/Responsibilities
m.	WIOA Boards and Employment Agencies	Workforce Development Board	Community Partner	X	Partner in development of updated policies regarding employment opportunities for homeless youth
n.	Landlords	Landlord Forum	Community Partner	X	Focus group participants: two-way communication about housing first and homeless youth, landlord needs/expectations, how youth can be successful in housing
o.	Public Housing Authorities	CMHA	Community Partner	X	Preference for youth aging out of foster care
p.	Institutions of Higher Education	University of Cincinnati	Community partner	X	Partner in development of updated policies regarding education opportunities and for and unique needs of homeless youth
q.	Community Development Corporations	WHRF Scholar House	Community Partner	X	Provides education and housing to pregnant and parenting homeless youth
r.	Affordable Housing Developers	Over the Rhine Community Housing	Community Partner	X	Partner in development of youth-appropriate housing
s.	Local Advocacy, Research, and Philanthropic Organizations	HRC	CoC Youth Workgroup	X	Advocacy on behalf of LGBT youth
t.	Privately Funded Homeless Organizations	Homeless Coalition	CoC Youth Workgroup	X	Community advocacy

Color = group invited to participate in implementation

KEYS – Community Partners and Their Roles

Leadership Team
Staff members who are ultimately responsible for submission of the plan. They work directly with the TA team and convene the Strategic Planning Committee now known as the CoC Youth Workgroup.

Organization	Name	Title
Lighthouse Youth & Family Services	Meredith Hicks mhicks@lys.org	Planning and Policy Director ***contact for KEYS plan**
Strategies to End Homelessness	Jen Best jbest@end-homelessness.org	Continuum of Care Director ***contact for KEYS plan**
Partners in Change	Kathy DeLaura	Planning Facilitator
Strategies to End Homelessness	Amanda Davis	Program Coordinator
Strategies to End Homelessness	Ryan Hall	Youth Program Coordinator
Strategies to End Homelessness	Allyson Richer	Program Manager
Lighthouse Youth & Family Services	Rayna Moore	Sr. Director of Homeless Youth Services; Youth Workgroup Chair
Lighthouse Youth & Family Services	Aliyah Cole	Planning and Policy Coordinator
Bethany House Services	Susan Schiller	Executive Director
Youth Advisory Board	Shawn Ingle	Youth Advisory Board Representative

Youth Workgroup
Staff members from key youth serving agencies who commit to a leadership role in the initiative.

Organization	Name	Title
Bethany House Services	Susan Schiller	Executive Director
Office of Mayor John Cranley	Yasmin Chilton	Public Affairs Aide
Office of Mayor John Cranley	Rahiel Michael	Legislative Aide
Children's Law Center	Rickell Howard	Ohio Litigation & Policy Director
Children's Law Center	Carrie Gilbert	Youth Re-entry Staff Attorney
Cincinnati Public Schools	Rebekah Beach	Project Connect Director
Easter Seals	Don Wittrock	Hamilton County Youth Services Manager
Hamilton County Job and Family Services	Lora Wolfe	Contract Services Director
HRC (Human Rights Campaign)	Kristin Shrimplin	Board of Governors
Journey	Tynisha Worthy	CLC Coordinator
Lighthouse Youth and Family Services	Geoffrey Hollenbach	Vice President of Children, Youth and Families
Lighthouse Youth and Family Services	Melissa Meyer	Safe & Supported Director
Lighthouse Youth and Family Services	Dan Stultz	Host Homes Manager
Lighthouse Youth and Family Services	Tatyana Rozhnova	LYFS Board of Trustees
Lighthouse Youth and Family Services	Angelique Metcalf	Lighthouse Youth Advisory Council
Lighthouse Youth and Family Services	Austin Tritt	Lighthouse Youth Advisory Council
Lighthouse Youth and Family Services	Breana Tucker	Lighthouse Youth Advisory Council
Lighthouse Youth and Family Services	De'Angelo Mitchell	Lighthouse Youth Advisory Council
Lighthouse Youth and Family Services	Gary Lee Gries, Jr.	Lighthouse Youth Advisory Council
Lighthouse Youth and Family Services	Joshua Alexander	Lighthouse Youth Advisory Council
Lighthouse Youth and Family Services	Keisha Dixon	Lighthouse Youth Advisory Council
Lighthouse Youth and Family Services	Lakasia Williams	Lighthouse Youth Advisory Council
Lighthouse Youth and Family Services	Lynese Brown	Lighthouse Youth Advisory Council
Lighthouse Youth and Family Services	Megan Waltz	Lighthouse Youth Advisory Council
Lighthouse Youth and Family Services	Rashad Pellot	Lighthouse Youth Advisory Council
Lighthouse Youth and Family Services	Sevyn Mills	Lighthouse Youth Advisory Council
Lighthouse Youth and Family Services	Tee Jai Brunner	Lighthouse Youth Advisory Council
Lighthouse Youth and Family Services	Yecowniyah Devond	Lighthouse Youth Advisory Council
ProKids	Charlotte Caples	CASA Program Director
Shelterhouse	Tim Godsey	Emergency Shelter Director
Strategies to End Homelessness	Kevin Finn	President and CEO
The Salvation Army	Sarah Wagner	Director of Social Ministries
The Salvation Army	Erin Meyer	Anti-Human Trafficking Program Manager
UC Berkeley School of Public Health	Marlena Smith-Millman	Planning and Policy Intern

Community Partners

Organization list and number of community members, youth and colleagues who participated in one of five opportunities to create and refine KEYS project concepts.

Organization	Number of Representatives
AmeriCorps	1
Bethany House Services	3
Camp Joy	2
Children's Law Center	1
Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center	3
Cincinnati Exchange Project	2
Cincinnati Police Department	1
Cincinnati Public Schools	2
Cincinnati Union Bethel	2
Cincinnati Works	2
City of Cincinnati	1
Homeless Coalition	2
IKRON Corporation	1
Interfaith Hospitality Network	2
Lighthouse Youth and Family Services	6
LYFT Learning	3
Ohio Dept. of Job & Family Services	4
ProKids	2
Rosemary's Babies	1
The Salvation Army	3
Shelterhouse	5
Strategies to End Homelessness	5
United Way of Greater Cincinnati	6
University of Cincinnati Emergency Medicine	1
Women Helping Women	1
Youth Advisory Board	4
YWCA Greater Cincinnati	1

KEYS – Goals, Objectives, Action Steps, Lead Agency, Implementation Date Chart

*Note: The *Lead Agency/Person(s) Responsible* column mainly represents the OH-500 Collaborative Applicant (Strategies to End Homelessness) or YHDP Lead Agency (Lighthouse Youth & Family Services) staff who will be responsible for overseeing the completion of the objectives. Community experts will be engaged in leadership roles throughout implementation.

Goals	Objectives	Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Person(s) Responsible*	Status	Estimated Implementation	Supporting Partners
1. Prevent homelessness before it occurs. Purpose: The Initiative will increase available resources and strategies to prevent young people from becoming homeless in the first place. This will reduce the overall demand on the system and reduce the trauma that young people experience while homeless.	1A: Increase Homelessness Prevention resources.	1.A.1.Develop and launch youth centered reconnection program.	1.A.1 – STEH / CoC Coordinated Entry Team – Ryan Hall, Jamie Hummer(STEH)	1.A.1 – In Progress	1.A.1 – By July 2018	Members of CoC Youth Workgroup
		1.A.2. Increase services provided by existing Central Access Point (CAP) hotline to include reconnection.	1.A.2 - STEH / CoC Coordinated Entry Team – Ryan Hall, Jamie Hummer (STEH)	1.A.2 – In Progress	1.A.2 – By July 2018	
		1.A.3. Improve Existing Shelter Diversion program to provide youth appropriate services.	1.A.3 - STEH / CoC Coordinated Entry Team – Ryan Hall, Jamie Hummer (STEH), Rayna Moore, David Durr (LYFS)	1.A.3 – In progress	1.A.3 – By July 2018	
		1.A.4. Increase financial resources for Shelter Diversion.	1.4.A. – Complete via YHDP community funding allocation per planning team recommendation – Jen Best, Ryan Hall (STEH)	1.A.4 – In progress	1.A.4 – By July 2018	

Goals	Objectives	Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Person(s) Responsible*	Status	Estimated Implementation	Supporting Partners
	1B: Standardize screening and assessment of youth at imminent risk of experiencing episodic homelessness to ensure equitable and quick connection to available services.	1.B.1.Implement phase 1 screening tool to assess housing and service need of all youth identified as at imminent risk of homelessness.	1.B.1 - STEH / CoC Coordinated Entry Team with LYFS shelter and street outreach directors – Ryan Hall, Jamie Hummer (STEH) Rayna Moore (LYFS)	1.B.1 – In progress	1.B.1 – By May 2018	
2. Provide safe and appropriate shelter and services to all wiling youth who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness. Purpose: Youth have a range of needs and the shelter and services offered will meet the specific needs of all youth including LGBTQ youth, pregnant/parenting youth, young victims of sex trafficking, and youth exiting foster care or criminal justice systems.	2A: Offer all homeless youth immediate connections to services via the Youth Dedicated Service Team.	2.A.1. Develop and implement Youth Dedicated Service team.	2A – KEYS - Youth Dedicated Service Planning Implementation Team – facilitated by STEH – Ryan Hall (STEH)	2A – In progress	2A – By July 2018	LYFS, Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health, Shelterhouse, Bethany House Services, The Salvation Army, YWCA
	2B: Increase Safe Shelter options	2.B.1.Establish Safe Shelter beds at Lighthouse Sheakley Center for Youth, the community's	2.B.1 – LYFS – Rayna Moore (LYFS)	2.B.1 – Near completion	2.B.1 – By Feb. 2018	

Goals	Objectives	Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Person(s) Responsible*	Status	Estimated Implementation	Supporting Partners
		emergency shelter dedicated to serving 18-24-year olds.				
		2.B.2. Ensure all shelter staff are culturally competent in working with youth and trained in Trauma Informed Care and Positive Youth Development.	2.B.2 – Youth CoC Workgroup and STEH (annual training series) – Melissa Meyer, Rayna Moore, Aliyah Cole(LYFS), Ryan Hall, Allyson Richer (STEH)	2.B.2 – In progress	2.B.2 – By May 2018	
3. Reduce the length of homeless episodes experienced by youth. Purpose: Reduce the amount of time that a young person spends waiting for housing, in shelter or on the street. The more efficiently youth move through the system, the less likely they will be to experience additional trauma. A new focus on reconnection and/or reunification with family (either as a housing option, or as a natural support) will ensure that every youth is connected to natural support/ permanent connections.	3A: Expand housing options for youth that are affordable, available, and meet their individual needs.	3.A.1. Implement Progressive Engagement Housing strategies. 3.A.2. Add Housing Navigators to the system to implement landlord engagement strategies.	3.A.1. – CoC Youth Workgroup – Ryan Hall, Jen Best (STEH) 3.A.2 – Select Agency per RFP process – Ryan Hall (STEH)	3.A.1 – In progress 3.A.2 – In progress	3.A.1 – By July 2018 3.A.2 – By July 2018	STEH / CoC Coordinated Entry Workgroup

Goals	Objectives	Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Person(s) Responsible*	Status	Estimated Implementation	Supporting Partners
	3B: Help youth reunify with or return home to their given or chosen families, as desired.	3.B.1. Develop and launch a reconnection program to increase the number of youth exiting shelter to permanent housing with friends/family.	3.B.1. CoC Youth Workgroup Shelters & Youth Advisory Council – Ryan Hall (STEH), Aliyah Cole (LYFS)	3.B.1 – In progress	3.B.1 – By July 2018	
		3.B.2. Provide the on-going support needed to make those relationships healthy and housing placement successful.	3.B.2. Youth Dedicated Service Team – Ryan Hall (STEH)	3.B.2 – In progress	3.B.2 – By July 2018	
4. Ensure that youth exiting the homeless system have the supports they need to remain housed. Purpose: Youth need on-going supports to help them achieve progress in the realms of stable housing, permanent connections, natural supports, education/employment and social and emotional well-being.	4A: Establish an aftercare program with clear connection to the CAP line for emergency assistance and homelessness prevention if needed at a future moment.	4.A.1. Develop and implement Youth Dedicated Service Team.	4.A.1 – KEYS - Youth Dedicated Service Planning Implementation Team – facilitated by STEH – Ryan Hall (STEH)	4.A.1 – In progress	4.A.1 – By July 2018	RFP process will be implemented to identify management oversight for Youth Dedicated Service Team
		4.A.2. Establish a systemic aftercare program for all youth exiting the homeless system.	4.A.2. CoC Youth Workgroup – KEYS - Aftercare Implementation Team – facilitated by STEH - Ryan Hall (STEH)	4.A.2 – In progress	4.A.2 – By July 2018	
	4B: Institutionalize a system reconnection program to build supports for all young people	4.B.1. Ensure reconnection program delivery is consistent among all partners.	4.B.1. STEH – Ryan Hall (STEH)	4.B.1 – In progress	4.B.1 – By September 2018	

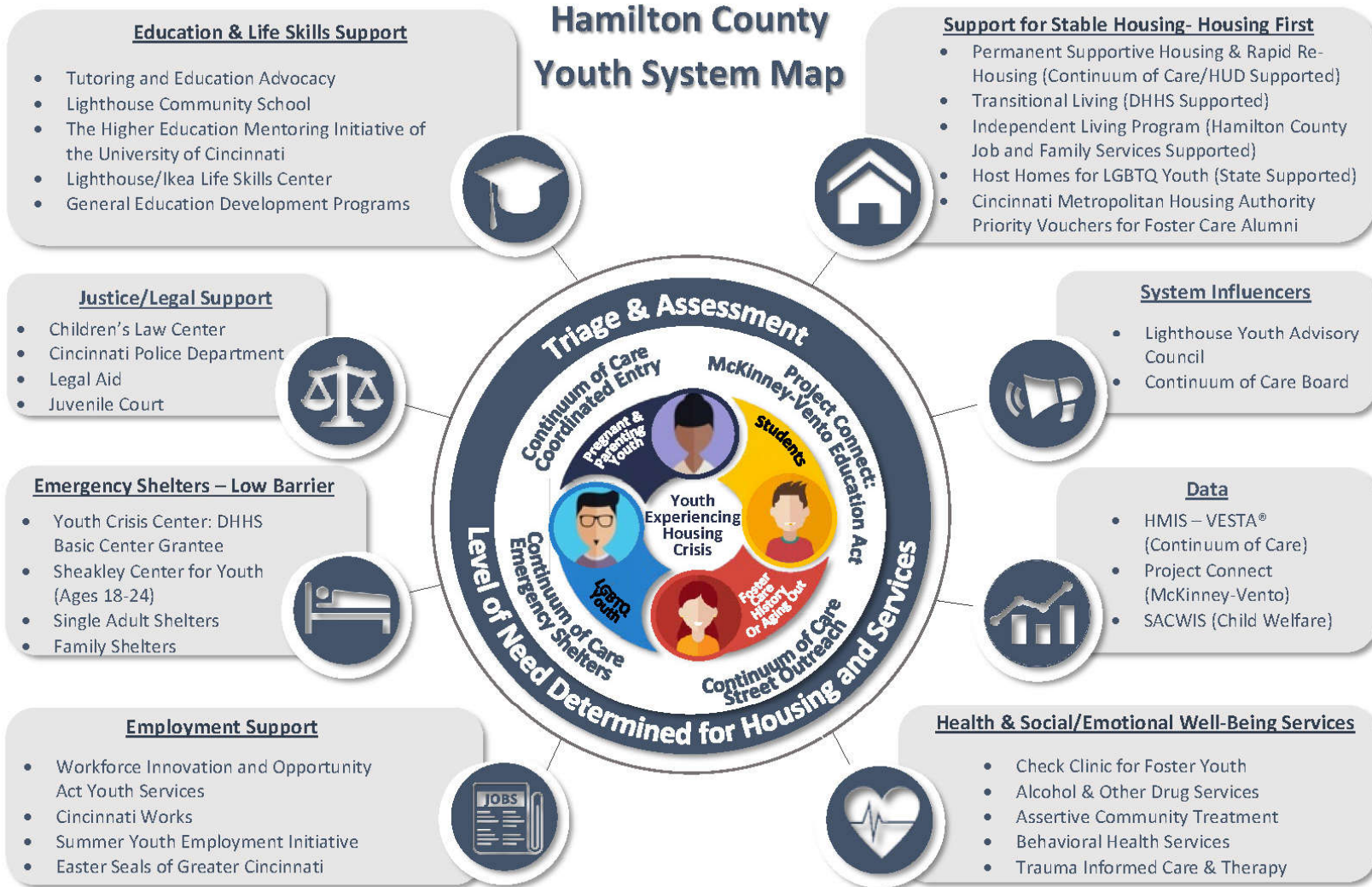| Goals	Objectives	Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Person(s) Responsible*	Status	Estimated Implementation	Supporting Partners
	4C: Support youth to achieve educational and employment goals that will help them achieve long term stability.	4.C.1. In addition to community identified success, allow young people to set their own goals.	4.C.1. LYAC, CoC Youth Workgroup, KEYS - Data Implementation Team – Jen Best, Ryan Hall (STEH); Rayna Moore, Meredith Hicks (LYFS); Meredith Alspaugh (Partnership Center)	4.C.1 – In progress	4.C.1 – By July 2018	
	4D: Improve ability to find and maintain services and housing.	4.D.1. Add youth dedicated Housing Navigators to the system and improve landlord relationships	4.D.1. RFP process – facilitated by STEH - Ryan Hall (STEH)	4.D.1 – In progress	4.D.1 – By July 2018	
		4.D.2. Increase affordable housing options through policy agenda.	4.D.2. CoC Youth Workgroup KEYS - Policy and Partnerships Implementation Team – Meredith Hicks (LYS)	4.D.2 – In progress	4.D.2 – By Jan. 2019	
5. Encourage innovation, system change and sustainability within the CoC and larger community. Purpose: Data collection and analysis will lead to CoC system changes that allow for evaluation of	5A: Improve data quality, use and sharing to better understand the needs of youth and the impact of community services.	5.A.1. Ensure consistent HMIS data collection processes across CoC youth serving agencies	5.A.1 – STEH – Jen Best, Allyson Richer, Jamie Hummer (STEH); Meredith Alspaugh (Partnership Center)	5.A.1 – In progress	5.A.1 – By July 2018	STEH / CoC Coordinated Entry; CoC Youth Workgroup

Goals	Objectives	Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Person(s) Responsible*	Status	Estimated Implementation	Supporting Partners
success and continuous innovation. A policy agenda will identify and remove barriers for young people achieving housing stability. Identifying multiple funding sources will ensure sustainability of the projects.		5.A.2. Implementation and regular review of youth by-name list maintained in HMIS, including racial equity measures.	5.A.2. Youth Dedicated Service Team and Street Outreach – Rayna Moore, David Durr (LYFS), Ryan Hall, Jamie Hummer (STEH)	5.A.2 – In progress	5.A.2 – By April 2018	
		5.A.3. Development of a data dashboard to track ongoing efforts locally and nationally.	5.A.3 – STEH – Jen Best, Amanda Davis, Aaron Flicker (STEH); Meredith Alspaugh (PCL); Meredith Hicks (LYFS)	5.A.3 – In progress	5.A.3 – By March 2018	
		5.A.4. Establishment of a plan for data sharing between key youth serving systems.	5.A.4 – Jen Best (STEH); Meredith Alspaugh (PCL)	5.A.4 – In progress	5.A.4 – By May 2018	
		5.A.5. All outcomes will be examined with a focus on equitable outcomes for youth.	5.A.5. YHDP CQI Team – Ryan Hall (STEH)	5.A.5 – Not yet started	5.A.5 – By July 2018 (with continued development after implementation)	
	5B: Increase collaboration between youth serving systems and track our community progress toward ending youth homelessness.	5.B.1. Launch a collaborative CoC Youth Workgroup to continue innovative decision making, develop best practices and review of outcomes/progress.	5.B.1 – Ryan Hall, Allyson Richer (STEH)	5.B.1 – In progress	5.B.1 – By Feb 2018	

Goals	Objectives	Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Person(s) Responsible*	Status	Estimated Implementation	Supporting Partners
		5.B.2. Ensure youth participation in the system through creation of paid youth leader positions.	5.B.2 – LYFS and LYAC – Aliyah Cole (LYFS)	5.B.2 – In progress	5.B.2 – By April 2018	
	5C: Encourage and leverage innovative ideas and partnerships to end youth homelessness among organizations both inside and outside the CoC, such as: corporations, chambers, workforce organizations, etc.	5.C.1. Establish youth preference in identified systems to ensure youth have immediate access to services when needed.	5.C.1. CoC Youth Workgroup – Meredith Hicks (LYFS); Jen Best (STEH)	5.C.1 – In progress & ongoing	5.C.1 – By July 2018	
		5.C.2. Explore adoption and implementation of a local Purple Umbrella project.	5.C.2. Melissa Meyer (LYFS); Lora Wolfe (Hamilton Co. JFS)	5.C.2 – In progress	5.C.2 – By July 2018	
		5.C.3. Explore transportation innovation and partnerships.	5.C.3. KEYS - Policy and Partnerships Implementation Team – Meredith Hicks (LYFS)	5.C.3 – In progress	5.C.3 – By November 2018	
		5.C.4. Explore data sharing technologies and local partnerships to begin implementation of predictive analysis with available data.	5.C.4. Jen Best, Aaron Flicker (STEH)	5.C.4. – In progress	5.C.4 – By January 2019	
	5D: Ensure funding to support activities in this plan.	5.D.1. Establish community process to incorporate HUD Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project funding into	5.D.1.CoC Board – Jen Best (STEH)	5.D.1 – In progress	5.D.1 – By February 2018	

Goals	Objectives	Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Person(s) Responsible*	Status	Estimated Implementation	Supporting Partners
		the local CoC prioritization process.				
		5.D.2. Explore option of flexible funds to meet unanticipated infrastructure needs.	5.D.2. Meredith Hicks (LYFS); Jen Best (STEH)	5.D.2 – In progress	5.D.2 – By July 2018	
		5.D.3. Identify systemic partnerships to improve services and better leverage funding and resources.	5.D.3. CoC Youth Workgroup/ KEYS Policy and Partnerships Implementation Team – Meredith Hicks (LYFS); Jen Best (STEH)	5.D.3 – In progress	5.D.3 – By July 2018	
		5.D.4. Host activities for current and potential funders such as briefings, tours, and conversations with Youth Leaders.	5.D.4. STEH, LYFS and key partners- Rayna Moore (LYFS); Allyson Richer (STEH)	5.D.4 – In progress	5.D.4 – By August 2018	
		5.D.5. Develop an Ending Youth Homelessness communication plan media strategy and resource / tool development.	5.D.5. LYFS – Rayna Moore (LYFS)	5.D.5 – In progress	5.D.5 – By July 2018	

Goals	Objectives	Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Person(s) Responsible*	Status	Estimated Implementation	Supporting Partners
	5E: Ensure all CoC staff working with youth are culturally competent, trauma informed, and utilize a positive youth development framework for ensuring equitable youth outcomes.	5.E.1. Establish a community-wide expectation of incorporating relevant methodologies into policy and practice across the youth serving systems.	5.E.1 – CoC Youth Workgroup – Rayna Moore (LYFS); Ryan Hall (STEH)	5.E.1 – In progress	5.E.1 - By July 2018	
		5.E.2. Create systemic response to ensure all youth are served consistently throughout the system.	5.E.2 - CoC Youth Workgroup – Rayna Moore (LYFS); Ryan Hall (STEH)	5.E.2 – In progress	5.E.2 – By July 2018	
		5.E.3. Ensure staff in HUD Demo projects reflect race, culture, and/or lived experience of the populations they serve and ensure governance and oversight bodies include youth of color and LGBTQ Youth.	5.E.3. STEH with agencies selected through RFP process to carry out – Ryan Hall (STEH)	5.E.3 – In progress	5.E.3 – By July 2018	
		5.E.4. Provide cultural competency training for CoC and youth-serving system staff.	5.E.4. – Melissa Meyer (LYFS)	5E.4 – In progress	5.E.4 – By July 2018	

Goals	Objectives	Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Person(s) Responsible*	Status	Estimated Implementation	Supporting Partners
	5.F. Create system changes through improved collaboration and development of a policy agenda to better support youth success and prevent homelessness.	5.F.1. Develop a joint community policy agenda with other partners working to end youth homelessness and poverty.	5.F.1. CoC Youth Workgroup /KEYS - Policy and Partnerships Implementation Team – Meredith Hicks (LYFS)	5.F.1 – In progress	5.F.1 – By July 2018	
		5.F.2.Implement identified system and policy changes to achieve goals.	5.F.2. Identified partners – Meredith Hicks (LYFS); Jen Best, Ryan Hall (STEH)	5.F.2 – In progress	5.F.2 – By July 2018	
		5.F.3.Align efforts with and support relevant community initiatives.	5.F.3. CoC Youth Workgroup Members and KEYS - Policy and Partnerships Implementation Team – Meredith Hicks (LYFS)	5.F.3 – In progress	5.F.3 – By July 2018	

Hamilton County Youth System Map

Education & Life Skills Support

- Tutoring and Education Advocacy
- Lighthouse Community School
- The Higher Education Mentoring Initiative of the University of Cincinnati
- Lighthouse/Ikea Life Skills Center
- General Education Development Programs

Support for Stable Housing- Housing First

- Permanent Supportive Housing & Rapid Re-Housing (Continuum of Care/HUD Supported)
- Transitional Living (DHHS Supported)
- Independent Living Program (Hamilton County Job and Family Services Supported)
- Host Homes for LGBTQ Youth (State Supported)
- Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority Priority Vouchers for Foster Care Alumni

Justice/Legal Support

- Children's Law Center
- Cincinnati Police Department
- Legal Aid
- Juvenile Court

System Influencers

- Lighthouse Youth Advisory Council
- Continuum of Care Board

Emergency Shelters – Low Barrier

- Youth Crisis Center: DHHS Basic Center Grantee
- Sheakley Center for Youth (Ages 18-24)
- Single Adult Shelters
- Family Shelters

Data

- HMIS – VESTA® (Continuum of Care)
- Project Connect (McKinney-Vento)
- SACWIS (Child Welfare)

Employment Support

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Youth Services
- Cincinnati Works
- Summer Youth Employment Initiative
- Easter Seals of Greater Cincinnati

Health & Social/Emotional Well-Being Services

- Check Clinic for Foster Youth
- Alcohol & Other Drug Services
- Assertive Community Treatment
- Behavioral Health Services
- Trauma Informed Care & Therapy

Central diagram

Triage & Assessment

Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry

Project Connect: McKinney-Vento Education Act

Level of Need Determined for Housing and Services

Continuum of Care Emergency Shelters

Continuum of Care Street Outreach

Youth Experiencing Housing Crisis

- Pregnant & Parenting Youth
- Students
- Foster Care History Or Aging Out
- LGBTQ Youth

Aspirational Innovations

- Rapid Re-Housing 2.0
- Expanded Host Home Program
- Integrated Data Systems
- Scholar Housing
- Increased Homelessness Prevention Efforts
- Housing for Youth Returning from Juvenile Justice Facilities
- Housing for Parenting Youth
- Housing for Non-Child Welfare Involved Homeless Youth
- More Robust Supportive Services
- Enhanced Life Skills Training
- Earlier Identification of Vulnerability Based on Risk Factors
- Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project Technical Assistance

PROGRESSIVE ENGAGEMENT HOUSING MODEL GRAPHIC
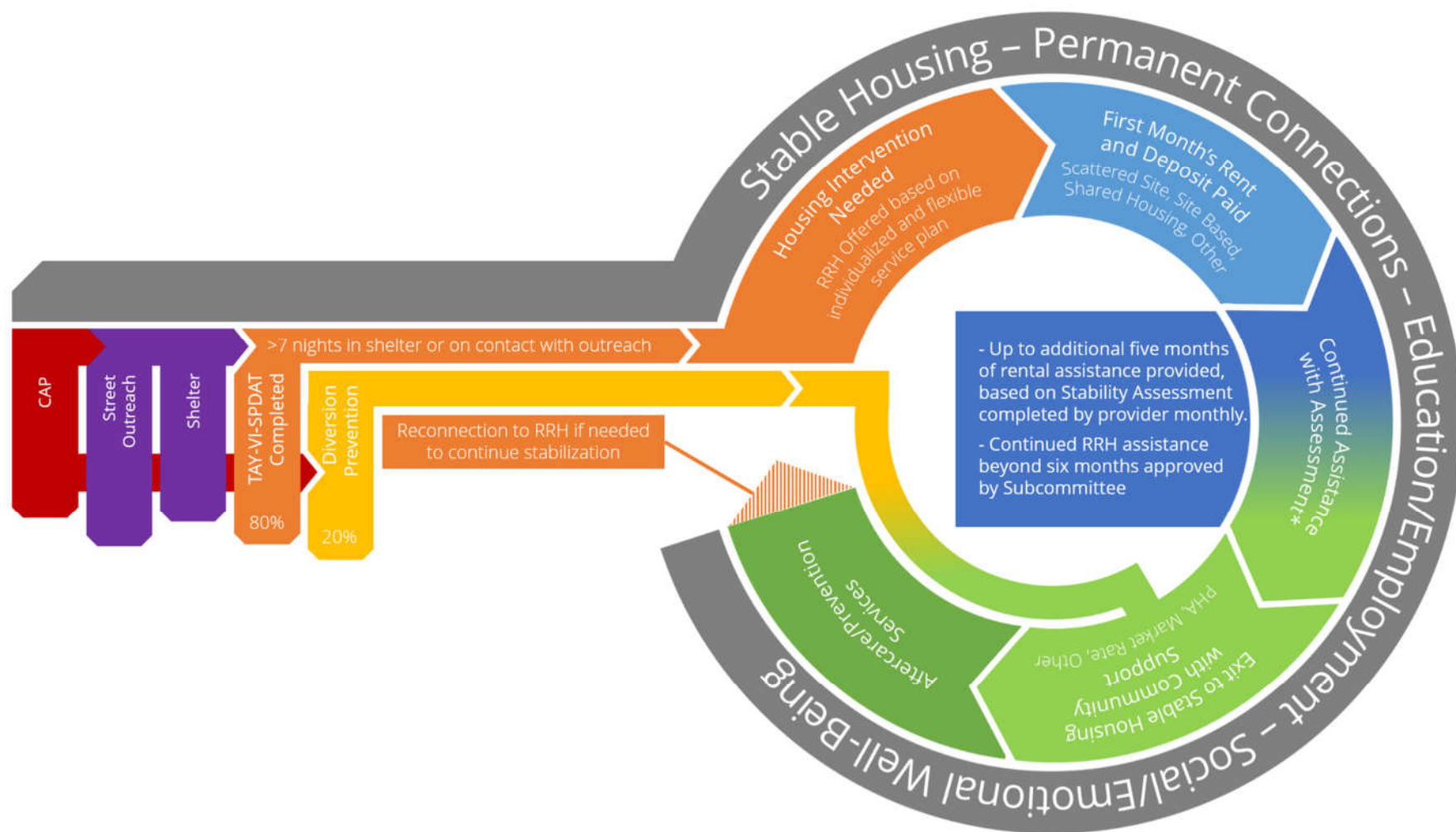
Youth Program Coordinator Job Description

Reports to: Program Manager at Strategies to End Homelessness

Position Overview

The position supports the youth homelessness initiatives of Strategies to End Homelessness (STEH) and the community, working closely with staff at Lighthouse Youth & Family Services. The position oversees the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funded Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project (YHDP) with a focus on implementation, benchmarking success, and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI). The position is responsible for supporting STEH's work to implement initiatives in an effort to end youth homelessness related to funding sources including, but not limited to: Continuum of Care, Emergency Solutions Grant, Homeless to Homes, Homeless Crisis Response Program, Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS, Runaway and Homeless Youth, City of Cincinnati, Hamilton County, and private funds.

Core Job Functions

- Understand a variety of different federal regulations including but not limited to the funding sources listed above
- Administer and manage all functions pertaining to the HUD funded YHDP, including but not limited to:
    - Participation in the development of the plan
    - Implementation of plan recommendations & projects
    - Completion of funding applications for community identified projects
    - Building a community process to ensure transparency of projects
    - Creating a plan for CQI & development of a data dashboard
    - Monitoring performance outcomes & completing HUD required reports
    - Assist with the CoC Youth Workgroup
- Create and maintain relationships with CoC members (leadership and staff) to ensure collaboration and agreement on system goals
- Advocate for youth on a systems level and work with community partners to establish thorough partnerships including data collections and buy-in to the plan; including but not limited child welfare and education
- Participate in monitoring and risk assessment processes and in coordination with Compliance Director, Finance Director, and CoC Director, as needed
- Work closely with senior staff and Lighthouse Youth & Family Services to further other YHDP activities, including but not limited to:
    - Interfacing with Federal Agencies, National Partners, Technical Assistance Team and other YHDP grantees
    - Research best practices and assess their potential for implementation
    - Strengthen relationships with youth-serving systems (e.g. child welfare, juvenile justice, mental health) and increase their involvement in YHDP
    - Communicate with community stakeholders regarding progress towards goals
    - Oversee implementation of system changes and strategies
- Stay apprised of legislative changes and their impact on the local funding processes, and disseminate information to agencies as necessary

YHDP Community Forum Graphic

Our YHDP Community Forum was attended by over 80 stakeholders including: community members, youth serving agencies, homeless providers, and youth with lived experience. Participants reviewed and recommended enhancements to potential YHDP project opportunities.

A graphic artist captured the day's proceedings in the illustration below:
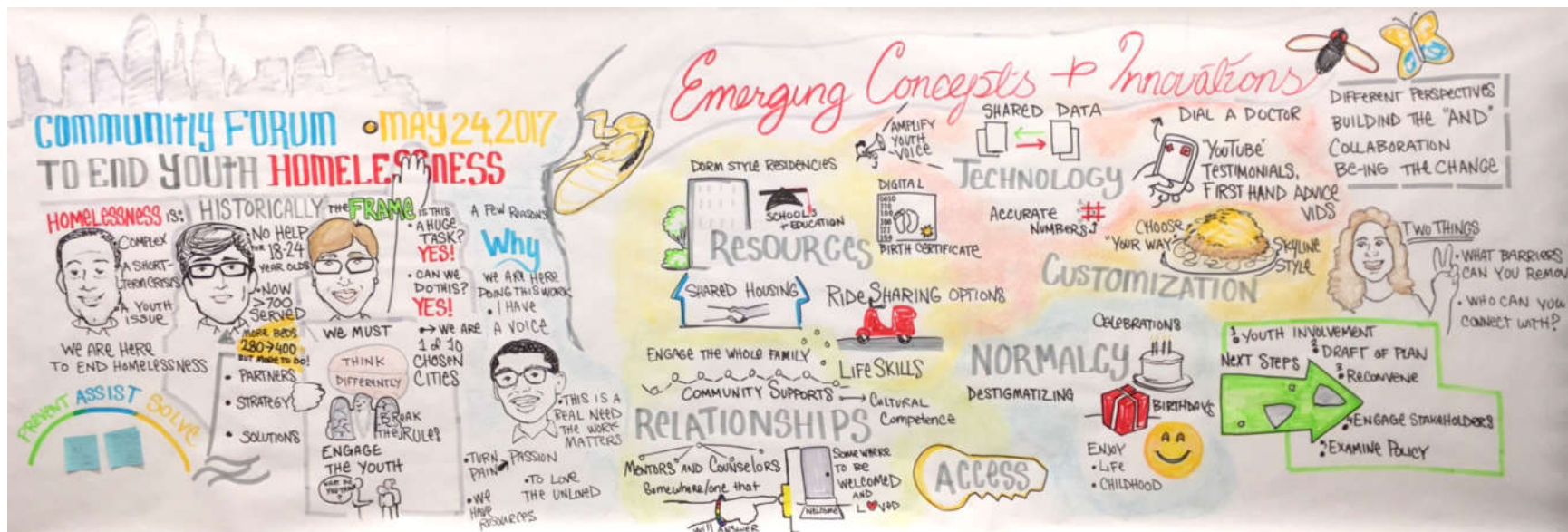
A graphic visualization will be completed on the full plan, once finalized and approved by HUD.

Youth Homelessness Coordinated Community Plan
Stakeholder Confirmation

CoC Name:	Cincinnati/Hamilton County Continuum of Care
Designated Point of Contact for HUD Correspondence (Name, email/phone):	Jen Best, Continuum of Care Director Jbest@end-homelessness.org 513-263-2729

We hereby confirm that we endorse the strategies and approach provided in the attached revision of our youth homelessness coordinated community plan. We agree to work toward this approach to implement a comprehensive system to prevent and end youth homelessness within our community.

YHDP Youth Advisory Board Members:

Name	Signature
Rashad Pellot	Rashad Pellot
Yanija Ervickson	Yanija Ervickson
Shizhoni Abe	
Douglas Palmer	Douglas Palmer
MAci Anderson	MAci Anderson
Luke Quigley	Luke Quigley
Philip Seaborough	Philip Seaborough
Putrie Seaborough	Putrie Seaborough
Angullare metcalf	Angelia Metcalf
Kattie Reynolds	Kattie Reynolds
Lahasia Williams	Lahasia Williams
Name	Signature

Youth Homelessness Coordinated Community Plan Stakeholder Confirmation

CoC Name:	Cincinnati/Hamilton County Continuum of Care (OH-500)
Designated Point of Contact for HUD Correspondence (Name, email/phone):	Jen Best, Continuum of Care Director Jbest@end-homelessness.org 513-263-2789

We hereby confirm that we endorse the strategies and approach provided in the attached revision of our youth homelessness coordinated community plan. We agree to work toward this approach to implement a comprehensive system to prevent and end youth homelessness within our community.

CoC designated representative:

Kevin Finn
Name

Strategies to End Homelessness
Organization

Signature

Kfinn@end-homelessness.org
Email/Phone

11/8/2017
Date

Youth Homelessness Coordinated Community Plan
Stakeholder Confirmation

CoC Name:	Cincinnati/Hamilton County Continuum of Care
Designated Point of Contact for HUD Correspondence (Name, email/phone):	Jen Best, Continuum of Care Director
	Jbest@end-homelessness.org
	513-263-2729

We hereby confirm that we endorse the strategies and approach provided in the attached revision of our youth homelessness coordinated community plan. We agree to work toward this approach to implement a comprehensive system to prevent and end youth homelessness within our community.

YHDP Team Lead Agency Authorized Representative:

Paul Haffner
Name
Lighthouse Youth & Family Services
Organization

Signature

phaffner@lys.org / 513-487-7109
Email/Phone

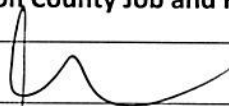11/6/17
Date

Youth Homelessness Coordinated Community Plan
Stakeholder Confirmation

CoC Name:	Cincinnati/Hamilton County Continuum of Care
Designated Point of Contact for HUD Correspondence (Name, email/phone):	Jen Best, Continuum of Care Director Jbest@end-homelessness.org 513-263-2789

We hereby confirm that we endorse the strategies and approach provided in the attached revision of our youth homelessness coordinated community plan. We agree to work toward this approach to implement a comprehensive system to prevent and end youth homelessness within our community.

Primary Child Welfare Agency Authorized Representative:

Hamilton County Job and Family Services

City, County or State Jurisdiction Name:

Moira Weir
_____
Name

Hamilton County JFS
_____
Organization

_____
Signature

wolfel01@jfs.hamilton-co.org
_____
Email/Phone

11-9-17
_____
Date

Youth Homelessness Coordinated Community Plan
Stakeholder Confirmation

CoC Name: Cincinnati/Hamilton County Continuum of Care

Designated Point of
Contact for HUD   Jen Best, Continuum of Care Director
Correspondence (Name,   Jbest@end-homelessness.org
email/phone):   513-263-2789

We hereby confirm that we endorse the strategies and approach provided in the attached revision of our youth homelessness coordinated community plan. We agree to work toward this approach to implement a comprehensive system to prevent and end youth homelessness within our community.

Local Government Authorized Representative:

City, County or State Jurisdiction Name: **City of Cincinnati, OH**

Rahiel Michael   11/15/17
Name   *Signature*   *Date*

City of Cincinnati   RAHIEL.MICHAEL@ CINCINNATI-OH.GOV
Organization   *Email/Phone*