The Community Coordinated Plan

Ending youth homelessness in Oklahoma City

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SUMMARY

Housing is a human right, and every young person deserves to have a safe place to call home. However, for many youth and young adults in Oklahoma City, this is not the case.

Oklahoma City is the most populous city in Oklahoma. Since 2010, the population has grown twice as fast as the nation[1]. Oklahoma City is often praised as being an affordable city to live in. However, this is only for those who make at or above the Oklahoma City median income level. Through data shown in local systemic factors, there is a lack of truly affordable housing in Oklahoma City. It has serious implications for young adults, particularly those who lack subsidy or other support. As young adults face increased difficulties in finding and retaining housing, many are forced into unstable living situations and often become homeless. Nearly one in every four youth between the ages of 15 and 24 years old in Oklahoma City is living below the poverty level[2] .

In 2022, 121 youth and young adults were experiencing literal homelessness on the night of the count. We also estimate there to be 505 youth unstably housed and at risk of homelessness. Using data from similar sources, we further estimate 707 young adults will experience homelessness in Oklahoma City in any given year, while 2,017 young adults are at risk of homelessness. We know youth often want to stay hidden for various reasons. Therefore, our numbers represent an undercount of youth experiencing homelessness in Oklahoma City.

Youth in Oklahoma have historically faced adversity. Local Point in Time data suggests 30-45% of youth experiencing homelessness identify as LGBTQ+ and gender non-conforming. Oklahoma has one of the highest rates of teen pregnancy in the country. According to the United Health Foundation, Oklahoma leads the country in childhood trauma. Despite facing incredible barriers, Oklahoma City's strength lies in youth and young people, and they are the ones leading this demonstration program by using their voices and lived expertise to advocate for effective change in our community.

Oklahoma City's Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program is founded on a commitment to engage our community with intentionality, using shared power to raise up the voices of those most impacted by marginalization, including local community members who live at the crossroads of intersecting oppressed identities. We envision Oklahoma City as a place where every youth and young adult has access to proactive, preventive services and a choice of prompt, safe and low-barrier housing options.

We are honored to have been selected by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to participate in the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP), an initiative that empowered our community to develop a more strategic and effective plan tailored to the unique needs and challenges faced by every youth and young adult experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. The Oklahoma City Coordinated Community Plan (CCP) focuses on a collaborative, strategic and youth-led approach for the community to prevent and end homelessness among youth and young adults.

[1] Greater Oklahoma City Chamber – 2020 At A Glance   [2] 2020 American Community Survey Data

Shared Vision & Values

Youth choice, inclusivity, trust, empathy and respect are the core values driving Oklahoma City's shared vision to end youth homelessness. We envision our city as a place where every youth and young adult has access to proactive, preventive services and a choice of prompt, safe and low-barrier housing options.

Our housing and supportive services will be youth- and data-driven, equitable, transparent, intentional, innovative, sustainable and well-coordinated. We will engage our community in a culturally integrative and trauma-informed way while using a positive youth development approach. We acknowledge we must always work to monitor and evaluate the results of our system to ensure our work continues to meet the vision and values of our diverse community.

"This plan gives me hope for the future to be better, with Youth Voice being held at the forefront of our efforts I truly believe things will change for the better"

STATEMENT OF NEED

Our Statement of Need was developed after months of reviewing data and having conversations with the Youth Action Board, youth with lived experience, youth service providers and other community stakeholders.

Oklahoma City is the most populous city in Oklahoma. The city is experiencing 1.37% average annual population growth. Since 2010, the population has grown twice as fast as the nation[3]. Over 13% of individuals living in Oklahoma City are between the ages of 15 and 24 years old. We understand the youth of our community are a great asset. They also have greater, unique needs than many other age groups. Nearly one in every four youth between the ages of 15 and 24 years old in Oklahoma City is living below the poverty level[4].

Unaccompanied adults living below the poverty line are at a much higher risk of experiencing homelessness because their incomes are not sufficient to afford housing. Oklahoma City is often praised as being an affordable city to live in. We are fortunate to have sufficient, affordable and adequate housing available in our community. However, this is only for those who make at or above the median income level. Housing is commonly considered to be affordable when no more than 30 percent of a household's gross income goes to the cost of housing. By this formula, a single-person household working fulltime at minimum wage ($16,120/year) should have housing cost less than $403/month. The 2022 Fair Market Rent for a one bedroom in Oklahoma City is $746/month[5]. The lack of truly affordable housing in Oklahoma City has serious implications for young adults, particularly those who lack subsidy or other support. As young adults face increased difficulties in finding and retaining housing, many are forced into unstable living situations and often become homeless.

Oklahoma City is an urban city, centrally located in a rural state. Oklahoma City is surrounded by rural counties with little to no services for individuals who are experiencing homelessness, particularly youth. Oklahoma City is the hub for many social service agencies who serve individuals who travel here for services. During the 2022 Youth Point in Time Count, 37% of the youth and young adults surveyed reported becoming homeless in different city than Oklahoma City. Two major interstates (I-40 and I-35) intersect in Oklahoma City making it easily accessible for youth to travel to or through.

Oklahoma City has high rates of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV). Oklahoma is sixth highest in the nation for IPV towards women[6]. Oklahoma County leads the state for domestic violence-related homicides[7]. Eighty percent of women who experienced IPV report they have been strangled by their partner[8]. According to the 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), one in 14 Oklahoma public high school students have experienced recent physical dating violence and approximately 7,900 have experienced sexual dating violence.
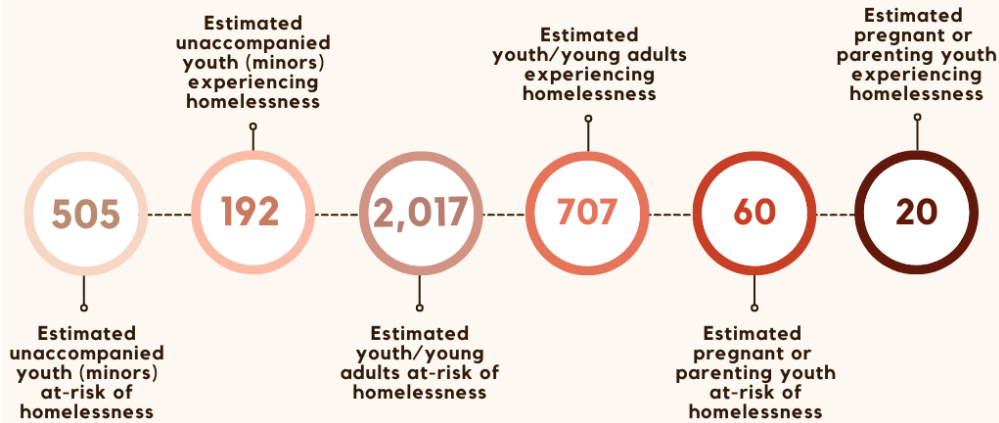
Historically, Oklahoma has one of the highest rates of teen pregnancy in the country. Teen pregnancy is closely linked to a number of critical social issues such as poverty and low educational attainment. In 2019, the state saw 27.4 births per 1,000 females aged 15-20, this is significantly higher than the national average of 16.7. Compared to other states in the nation, Oklahoma ranked 4th highest for teen birth rates for teens ages 15-19 years old[9].

In 1948, the "Saturday Evening Post" named Oklahoma City the capital of the Bible Belt. The term Bible Belt is used to define a region in which Southern Baptist, Methodist, and evangelical Christians were predominant religious group. Almost seventy-five years later Oklahoma is still deep in the Bible Belt and where 48% of residents are classified as "very religious"[10]. Although some have become more accepting and supporting of the LGBTQ+ community there are still many who are not. LGBTQ+ youth face dipropionate rates of discrimination, violence, and often rejection by their families. Local data suggest 30-45% of youth experiencing homelessness identify as LGBTQ+.

Defining Homelessness for Unaccompanied Youth and Young Adults in Oklahoma City

Throughout this Statement of Need, reference is made to youth and young adults who are at risk or experiencing homelessness. There are many forms of youth homelessness; youth may be living in a place not meant for human habitation such as outside, abandoned buildings or cars. They could be temporarily staying in a transitional living program or emergency shelter. Many youth are "couch surfing" or doubled up, therefore at risk of losing their nighttime residence. We define youth as individuals 13-17 and young adults as those 18-24. As an inclusive group, they would be those 13-24. An unaccompanied youth refers to an individual who is under the age of 25 and not part of a family household, foster or institutional care. As a social services community, defining youth homelessness often depends on the type of funding or support the young person is receiving due to federal agencies using different definitions to define homelessness. The McKinney-Vento Act defines homeless youth as individuals under the age of 20 who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. This definition includes youth who are doubled up or couch surfing, living in a motel, sheltered or unsheltered. HUD defines homeless youth as those under the age of 25 who are living in emergency, transitional housing or place not meant for human habitation.

Estimates of Youth and Young People Experiencing or At-Risk of Experiencing Homelessness in Oklahoma City

Estimated unaccompanied youth (minors) experiencing homelessness

Estimated youth/young adults experiencing homelessness

Estimated pregnant or parenting youth experiencing homelessness

505 — 192 — 2,017 — 707 — 60 — 20

Estimated unaccompanied youth (minors) at-risk of homelessness

Estimated youth/young adults at-risk of homelessness

Estimated pregnant or parenting youth at-risk of homelessness

Annualized Number

Calculating an annualized number of youth experiencing homelessness or those at risk of experiencing homeless is needed to get a better understanding of the needs of the youth in Oklahoma City as well as picture of where the gaps in services might be. However, this process is not without challenges. This population is very adept at remaining hidden from sight and formal services. Because of this, attempts to quantify this population can be very difficult and involves significant estimation of the data. Youth in this population have significantly more mobility and options to stay with friends or family compared to adult homeless. Therefore, it is likely that the calculated annualized numbers represent an undercount of youth experiencing homelessness in Oklahoma City. It is also understood most of the young people we estimate to be homelessness or at risk of homelessness will not ever enter our youth homelessness system. Using data from different sources, we estimate 192 youth under 18 will experience unaccompanied homelessness in Oklahoma City over a year. We also estimate there to be 505 youth unstably housed and at risk of homelessness. Using data from similar sources, we further estimate 707 young adults will experience homelessness in Oklahoma City in any given year, while 2,017 young adults are at risk of homelessness.

In analyzing our local data and annualized number, it is important we use the findings of the Voices of Youth Count conducted by Chapin Hall. The Voices of Youth provides the most representative national data on homelessness among youth and young adults to date. Their research has informed various subpopulations of youth like pregnant and parenting youth, LGBTQ+ youth, the intersection between homeless youth and the foster care system and the intersection of youth homelessness and the effects on their education. This research identified major challenges in addressing youth homelessness, but also provided recommendations for service providers and communities.

HMIS Data

Data from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) was used to estimate the annualized number of under 18 youth at risk of homelessness and those experiencing homelessness as well as young adults 18-24 at risk of homeless or experiencing homelessness. In 2021, unduplicated data from HMIS showed 187 youth under 18 experienced homelessness, one youth under 18 at risk of homelessness, 665 young adults experiencing homeless and 85 young adults at risk of homelessness. These numbers represent the youth and young adults who have HMIS program entries into emergency shelter, homelessness prevention programs, rapid re-housing, drop-in centers and street outreach program. Historically, Oklahoma City has high HMIS utilization rate amongst its homeless services programs. This is certainly the case with youth-serving agencies. 100% of agencies who are dedicated to serving homeless youth in Oklahoma City enter data into HMIS. Despite having great HMIS coverage, we acknowledge our HMIS data is still undercounting youth and young adults experiencing homelessness and those at risk because our system does not encompass all providers youth connect to such as mental health, schools and workforce partners.

Journey Home Coordinated Entry System (CES) Data

To understand the needs and characteristics of youth experiencing homelessness, Oklahoma City Continuum of Care (CoC) and Homeless Youth Alliance collects and frequently examines data from Transitioned Aged Youth – Vulnerability Index- Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (TAY-VI-SPDAT). Oklahoma City CoC uses the TAY-VI-SPDAT to prioritize youth and young adults for housing and services through our Coordinated Entry System. In 2021, 379 youth and young adults identifying as homeless completed assessments. 48% reported literal homelessness most of the time, while 50% reported being homeless for a year or longer. 23% reported four or more episodes of homelessness in the last three years. The following are reasons youth indicated the need to leave their home: 10% left due to a difference of religious or cultural beliefs from their parents, guardians, or caregivers; 9% reported conflicts regarding gender identify or sexual orientation; 60% reported an unhealthy or abusive relationship led to their homelessness. Six months prior to completed the TAY-VI-SPDAT, 25% youth reported using a crisis service, and 32% reported threatening to or trying to harm themselves or others in the past year. 40% reported at least once police interaction, 17% spent at least one night in jail, and 26% reported being incarcerated prior to the age of 18. Additionally, 32% reported being attacked or beaten up since they became homeless; 24% reported self-report mental health concerns; 12% identified having a learning or developmental disability; 31% reported marijuana at 12 or younger, and 24% engaged in risky behaviors such as exchanging sex for money, food, drugs or a place to stay, running drugs for someone, having unprotected sex with someone without knowing the partner and/or sharing needles. All of this indicates the factors that lead youth into homelessness and keep them in homelessness are prevalent within Oklahoma City.

PIT Youth Count

Every year the City of Oklahoma City conducts a Point in Time (PIT) Count to get an estimate of all the sheltered and unsheltered individuals in the community experiencing homelessness on a single night. The data for sheltered individuals comes from HMIS and line surveys, but data for unsheltered individuals requires a coordinated effort of street outreach. This data is analyzed and reported to HUD. Individuals 24 and under are analyzed separately. This count provides vital information about needed services specifically targeting youth and young adults. Without this vital data, it would be hard for the community to raise awareness about the unique needs of youth or the issues faced by this population. Data from the 2019, 2020 and 2022 PIT counts provide both sheltered and unsheltered estimates of youth, but the 2021 count does not provide data on unsheltered youth. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Oklahoma City did not conduct an unsheltered count in 2021. In 2022, 121 youth and young adults were experiencing literal homelessness on the night of the count. Of those counted, 21 were under 19. 71 youth were in an emergency shelter, while 36 were in a transitional housing program. On the night of the count, 14 unaccompanied youth were unsheltered, sleeping on the streets, in a car or abandoned building.

In addition to the regular PIT Count, the last several years the Homeless Youth Alliance and the Youth Action Board have conducted a youth specific Youth Point in Time event to get a more accurate depiction of youth homelessness in Oklahoma City. The youth event is held in locations identified by youth with lived experience. The event not only serves the purpose of counting youth and young adults but also connects youth with resources. The event typically includes entertainment, a meal, clothing closet, food baskets, hygiene packs, STI testing, free haircuts and connection to mental health providers, transportation assistance and education providers. Whereas the PIT only counts those experiencing literal homelessness, during the Youth Event all youth are surveyed.

Child Welfare

The Oklahoma Human Services Child Welfare Services provides several services to families and children across the state to ensure their wellbeing and safety. One of those services is managing the state's foster care system. Research by Chapin Hall in the Voices of Youth count found 44% of youth and young adults experiencing homeless had previous experience in foster care. Of youth and young adults experiencing homelessness who were surveyed during Oklahoma City's 2022 Point in Time Count, approximately 37% reported previous foster care involvement.

In 2021, there were 10,480 children in Oklahoma City in Oklahoma Human Services custody. 192 aged out of the foster care system, and 797 were 16 or older. During listening sessions with youth with lived experience, it was explained some young people aged out of foster care with what they felt was an unrealistic permanency plan and they ended up homeless. Many of the young people described spending their teens in group home settings and not obtaining the life skills and knowledge they feel they needed to live on their own independently after turning 18.

Others were adopted out of foster care prior to turning 18 but after turning 18 became homeless after being kicked out or running away from their adoptive home.

Additionally, based on 2021 estimates of out-of-home placements in Oklahoma City, we estimated 34% were Black, 32% white, 24% Hispanic, 9.9% American Indian and less than 1% Asian Pacific Islanders. This data points to disproportionality because the population of Oklahoma City is 14.28% Black, and 34% of the youth in out-of-home care, and potentially across the foster care system, may be Black.

Education Data

Data from the National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) for the 2019-2020 school year showed there was a total of 2,474 homeless students enrolled in Oklahoma City Public Schools. Because of the size of Oklahoma City, other neighboring school districts are located within the Oklahoma City limits so this number is not completely representative of all students in the city. When counting students who are homeless, the NCHE considers students who are doubled up, sheltered, unsheltered as well as those living in hotels/motels. Almost 84% of the total students were doubled up and 8% of these students were sheltered. Approximately 3% of these students were living in hotels/motels and nearly 5% were unsheltered. 274 youth were identified as unaccompanied homeless youth, who could have either a sheltered or unsheltered status. The change in the unaccompanied homeless youth in Oklahoma City Public schools represents a 41% increase when compared to the 2017-2018 school year.

Based on the PIT Survey, the Youth Advisory Board and the City of Oklahoma City hosted listening sessions held with youth with lived experience and the following needs were identified for all youth and young adults experiencing homelessness.

Youth & Young Adults Eperienceing Homelessness

Needs				
Housing	**Education**	**Employment**	**Transportation**	**Social & Emotional**
Access Overnight shelter with no wait lists. Info about housing options available **Help** Getting identification documents Housing application, security deposit, rent, utilities **More** Pet friendly housing Housing in desirable areas Group housing for youth who want a roommate Non-population specific housing for youth who don't fit into a category Ongoing life skills development through case management and group classes	**Access** Technology and wifi to complete online education programs. Trade schools and training outside of college Low-cost/no-cost driver's education and license exams **Help** Enrolling in school *(decrease amount of time it takes to transfer)* Completing the FAFSA and connecting to scholarships and federal grants **More** Transportation GED, alternative education programs Liaisons at school to provide assistance and additional support New clothing *(to fit in with peers)* Free/low-cost tuition Quiet spaces/separate study rooms in emergency shelters and drop-in centers	**Access** Career advisors Guaranteed employment **Help** Connect youth to youth freindly employers *(understand challenges they face while experiencing housing instability)*	**Access** Work attire or uniforms Simplified work permit for minors under age 16. **Help** Guide youth through understanding what may be discovered with a background check **More** Mentoring and internships Childcare	**Access** Food Peer mentors Mental health care 24/7 drop-in services Comprehensive sex Ed. **More** Group therapy options in shelter or near housing

Identified Needs of Pregnant and Parenting Youth and Young Adults Experiencing Homelessness

Being a young parent creates challenges but being a young parent who is homeless or at risk of being homeless creates even more challenges. In fact, Chapin Hall's research identified although rates of teen pregnancy and births have decreased nationally, there are a significant number of parenting and pregnant young adults across the country. Young adults who have experienced homelessness in the past year also experience parenting more than their same-aged peers who have at least one child. This research also showed 1.1 million children were in the home with a parent who experienced homelessness in the last year.

These youth must not only take care of themselves, but they are also concerned for the health and wellbeing of their children or unborn children. Being able to access services like healthcare, education and managing a relationship can be especially challenging without a home. Eight parenting youth households were counted during the 2022 PIT Count. Those households were comprised of twenty individuals, ten parenting youth and ten children. All parenting youth identified in the 2022 PIT Count were 18-24.

Pregnant and Parenting Youth & Young Adults Experiencing Homelessness

Needs			
Housing	**Education**	**Employment**	**Social & Emotional**
Housing options: Plenty of space for youth to grow/play Safe, family friendly neighborhoods Close to childcare Unwed parents **Shelter options:** Allow children Uunwed parents	Childcare available at school or nearby Transportation assistance	**Access** Childcare **Help** Transportation assistance **More** Flexible employment	**Access** Pregnant/parenting youth groups with similar experiences (*Most parenting groups available are made up of moms without lived experience of housing instability*) Legal assistance for family law matters Mental health Counseling Parent Mentors

Identified Needs of LGBTQ+ Youth and Young Adults Experiencing Homelessness

Compared to other youth, LGBTQ+ youth are at an increased risk for homelessness. In a national sample of homeless youth, this risk was calculated at more than two times the rate of homelessness for non-LGBTQ+ youth (Morton et al., 2018). Additionally, this rate does not account for instances where youth might be hesitant to disclose their sexual orientation or instances where this information is not collected. This points to the underreporting of this data in the field.

To compound this challenge, these youth also experience more trauma and adversity when compared to their heterosexual peers. Youth who identified as both LGBTQ+ and Black or multiracial had some of the highest rates of homelessness[11]. 43% of the youth surveyed during the Oklahoma City's 2022 Youth Point in Time event identified as LGBTQ+.

LGBTQ+ Youth and Young Adults Experiencing Homelessness

Needs			
Housing	**Education**	**Employment**	**Social & Emotional**
Fair Housing education for landlords centered around discrimination faced by LBGTQ+ tenants Safe, secure housing options Equitably intake processes Connection to legal assistance when discrimination occurs	Sex education foucsed on gender and sexuality	Identify pool of employers who are affirming Connection to legal assistance when discrimination occurs	Education for parents and families Affirming counseling services Connection to supportive mentors or community partners

Gaps Analysis

In addition to exploring the demographic information and needs of youth and young adults experiencing homelessness in In addition to exploring the demographic information and needs of youth and young adults experiencing homelessness in Oklahoma City, we examined our current system to determine the availability of housing. According to the 2022 Housing Inventory count we determined:

• Oklahoma City has 32 emergency shelter beds specifically for youth and young adults, all of which were full on the night
of the 2022 PIT Count. Leaving 14 youth and young adults unsheltered.

• There are currently 36 transitional housing units for youth and young adults, 17 of those are only for males. All 36 units of transitional housing were full on the night of the 2022 PIT Count. We expect another 20 units of transitional housing to come on board by summer 2022 – giving Oklahoma 56 beds for transitional housing.

• With the assistance provided by HUD through the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) – COVID funding, Oklahoma City started its first youth dedicated rapid re-housing project. The project currently can serve approximately 12 young adults. We have a separate ESG project which prioritizes assistance for young adults but is not solely dedicated to serving young adults.

• Of the 1,115 Permanent Supportive Housing beds in Oklahoma City, none are dedicated to youth and young adults

Our analysis confirms we need to increase the housing options available to youth, particularly those that are low barrier and non-time limited. This is also consistent with what youth with lived experience have stated in listening sessions and through discussions with the Youth Action Board.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES & KEY PRACTICES

Oklahoma City will use these guiding principles to strategically implement change in our community throughout our goals, objectives and action items.

Our guiding principles include an assurance to:

1. The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness Youth Framework and Four Core Outcomes (stable housing, permanent connections, education/employment and social/emotional well-being).

2. Equity

3. Youth Choice

4. Focus on Special Populations

5. Positive Youth Development & Trauma-Informed Care

6. Housing First

7. Family Engagement

8. Coordinated Entry for Youth

The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness Youth Framework and Four Core Outcomes

The core outcomes listed below, determine the goals, objectives and action steps of this plan and are incorporated in all associated implementation strategies:

Stable Housing
The goal of this plan is to prevent homelessness and ensure a clear path towards permanent housing stability for youth and young adults. The community will work intentionally to remove barriers and provide access to proactive preventive services and a choice of prompt, safe and low-barrier housing options. Housing planning begins at the time of outreach contact and/or Coordinated Entry assessment locally and includes a preliminary triage and diversion strategy to evaluate alternative stable housing opportunities that reinforce existing natural support networks. Youth and young adults will lead and collaborate with providers throughout service participation to plan their own individualized strategies to promote housing stability.

Permanent Connections
Permanent connections include ongoing attachment and connectedness to families, communities, schools and other positive social networks of young people's choosing. This plan and the projects chosen will offer family engagement and support to assist youth as they re-connect to families of origin and/or other supportive peers and adults, their chosen families.

Education/Employment
Our plan will examine data, work on collaboration between schools, employers and higher education so youth and young adults can perform and complete educational goals and obtain and maintain employment. The plan will also create focused, specialized training and leverage the local workforce development system. The community will work to remove all barriers to success in education and employment for youth and young adults and support the pursuit of a variety of paths with a holistic and individualized approach.

Social/Emotional Well-being
Addressing youth and young adults physical, mental, emotional and social needs is crucial part of this plan. The community will embrace and be intentional with positive youth development, trauma-informed care, resilience building and will encourage the ongoing development of skills, strengths, assets and hobbies among youth and young adults to ensure continued stability and healthy behavior. Projects have the flexibility to accommodate individualized and youth-driven supports that empower youth, build upon their strengths and support the long-term goal of self-sufficiency.
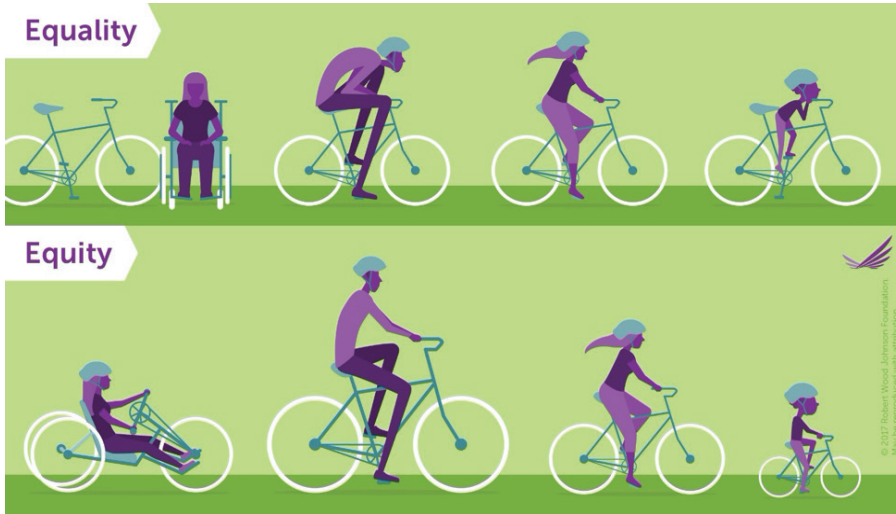
Equity

Oklahoma City's Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program is founded on a commitment to engage our community in with intentionality, using shared power to raise up the voices of those most impacted by marginalization including local community members who live at the crossroads of intersecting oppressed identities.

Our statement of need data indicates notable disparities in rates of poverty and homelessness within communities. Disproportionately high rates of poverty are experienced by Black Hispanic/Latinx, Indigenous and LGBTQ+ and gender non-conforming youth and young adults. These disparities are paralleled in disproportionately high rates of homelessness among these groups and most significantly experienced by unaccompanied Black/African American males, parenting Hispanic/Latinx females and all subpopulations of Native American youth.

LGBTQ+ and gender non-conforming youth are at an increased risk for homelessness. In a national sample of homeless youth, this risk was calculated at more than two times the rate of homelessness for non-LGBTQ+ youth[12]. Additionally, this rate does not account for instances where systemic oppression and fear of safety keeps youth from self-identifying in the LGTBQ+ and gender non-conforming community. Youth might be hesitant to disclose their sexual orientation or there may be instances where this information is not collected. This points to the underreporting of this data in the field.

To compound this challenge, these youth also experience more trauma and adversity when compared to their heterosexual peers. Youth who identified as both LGBTQ and Black or multiracial had some of the highest rates of homelessness . 43% of the youth surveyed during the Oklahoma City's 2022 Youth Point in Time event identified as LGBTQ+ and/or gender non-conforming.

In 2021, there were 10,480 children in Oklahoma Human Services custody in Oklahoma City. Of that total, 192 aged out of the foster care system and 797 were 16 or older. During listening sessions with youth with lived experience, it was explained some young people aged out of foster care with what they felt was an unrealistic permanency plan and they ended up homeless.

Additionally, based on 2021 estimates of out-of-home placements in Oklahoma City, we estimated 34% of this total was Black, 32% white, 24% Hispanic, 9.9% American Indian and less than 1% Asian Pacific Islanders. This data points to disproportionality. Although the population of Oklahoma City is 14.28% Black, 34% of the youth in out-of-home care in Oklahoma City and potentially across the foster care system may be Black.

Strategies to address disparities and create increased equity in OKC:

• Identify white dominant, hetero-normative, cisgender normative, ageist, ableist, paternalistic and binary-focused cultures and practices present within the systems and organizations currently working to address youth homelessness.

• Create new engagement strategies that better reflect the rich diversity of the region, re-distribute power and more effectively engage diverse stakeholders at all levels of the YHDP and CoC, prioritizing opportunities for participation and representation of people with lived experiences of homelessness and housing instability.

• Be intentional and action oriented towards opportunities for reflection at the individual, organizational, system and community levels that need to drive transformation.

• Increase recruitment and retention of a diverse staff, board and team of volunteers, who are essential to providing culturally integrative services, including recruitment of more bilingual staff and volunteers.

• Require staff, volunteers and board members of every service agency to attend racial equity training annually.

• Develop cross-sector collaboration and expand efforts to address racial equity and LGBTQ+ inclusivity with system partners including education, workforce, health, behavioral health and other systems, which impact youth experiencing homelessness and housing instability.

• Build Continuous Quality Improvement strategies that collect and track data to ensure the CoC is equitably meeting the needs of youth by embracing the work of racial equity and LGBTQ+ inclusivity as an on-going improvement process at project and system levels.

• Require programs to use assessment tools and marketing materials that are affirming in language and messaging and are inclusive of all populations of you at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

• Provide counseling services that provide individualized care for the trauma and mental health issues associated with all systemically oppressed communities.

Youth Choice

It is our belief self-determination leads to empowerment. Allowing youth to exercise self-determination is a youth-centered approach that values youth's expressed needs and their self-awareness. Youth have the right and the ability to direct the course of their lives and participating in services does not negate that truth.

We will work to ensure youth and young adults are able to advocate for their wants and desires and have control over when and how to tell their story to others. This youth-centered approach emphasizes youth choice in terms of housing youth need and the extent and nature of supports and services they access and presents alternative options for youth when needed. We trust them to determine their own paths; the homeless service system simply provides them resources to help them on their journey to the life they define for themselves.

Stragegies to ensure youth choice in OKC:

• Ensure youth direct the development and implementation of their service plan.

• Develop policies, procedures and practices that promote youth choice and provide consistent opportunities for feedback that is not only listened to but also incorporated.

• Provide psychotherapeutic options so the youth can choose what works best for them, including art therapy, animal therapy, talk therapy, etc.

• Offer a variety of options involving family reunification, host homes, transitional housing, rapid rehousing or group living as well as the opportunity for ownership of their own space.

• Case managers and other direct service staff will be fully trained to let youth lead and will not assume what is best or push their own opinions on youth in crisis.

• Employment and education services will be developed based on individual interests and personal motivations.

• Support youth to relocate through transportation and moving assistance to a community of their choice even if it is outside of Oklahoma City.

• Ongoing support services will include connections to agencies and individuals that honor and reflect the identities of the youth and young adults served.

Focus on Special Populations

Our community recognizes the significant impact of homelessness on special populations, such as LGBTQ+, gender non-conforming, minors (under 18), youth involved with juvenile justice and child welfare systems and victims/survivors of sexual trafficking & exploitation. These communities are systemically marginalized and excluded from or have higher barriers and lack of access to generalized human services. Therefore, engagement strategies, housing and service-delivery approaches that are responsive to their specific needs must be identified and incorporated into this plan. Our community is committed to offering youth services and support specific to the needs of the special population(s) being served. Below is an array of strategies to be implemented by our community to respond to the needs of the special populations of youth we serve. Many of these strategies may be applicable to all populations of youth or to multiple special populations.

Targeted Universalism
The National Equity Project and our work on our Community Coordinated Plan draws inspiration from the work of John Powell, Director of the Othering and Belonging Institute at UC Berkeley who has written for many years about an approach to policy making and structural change called Targeted Universalism. Simply stated, Targeted Universalism is an approach to advancing equity and justice that acknowledges our common goals and shared fate as human beings, while also addressing the stark contrasts in access to opportunity between different groups of people as a result of structural racism and other forms of systemic oppression and "othering". Targeted Universalism centers around listening to and understanding the experiences of people who we have most marginalized and who are experiencing the greatest harm in our current systems in order to expand what Powell calls the "Circle of Human Concern". Done well, this approach redistributes power so that the voices of people who are least well served in the current system are prominent in decision making and governance and their experiences and needs are centered in the development of priorities and new approaches. Through listening, we come to understand the policies, practices, and structures that are causing harm and that we must change to create more just systems and greater well-being in our communities.

The other benefit of targeted universalism is it focuses on populations that are most marginalized because historically it's where the most harm has been done. By focusing our time, energy, most creative thinking and resources on Black, Indigenous, all other youth of color and LGBTQ+ youth, we are then creating a strategy that can act as a blueprint for lifting all youth and young adults (and other populations) out of homelessness.

LGBTQ+ & Gender Non-Conforming Youth
It is nationally recognized LGBTQ+ and gender non-conforming youth are overrepresented in the homeless population. Systemic oppression and fear of safety has often kept youth from self-identifying in the LGTBQ+ community. Therefore, it is imperative we are aware of this and work strategically to create a community so LGTBQ+ and gender non-conforming youth receive the specialized attention they need, and equity is created in our continuum of care for youth.

Strategies to ensure a focus on special populations in OKC:

• Design LGBTQ+ and gender non-conforming population-specific training for staff, including required annual trainings for partners supplying supplemental services. These partnerships will inform the services we offer, the training we provide our staff and referrals to Coordinated Entry.

• Seek authentic collaboration with LGBTQ+ and gender non-conforming youth by linking to peer networks, increasing leadership and feedback positions for LGBTQ+ and gender non-conforming youth and cultivating programs led by, designed by and providing services to LGBTQ+ and gender non-conforming people.

• Offer optional support groups that are led by members of the LGBTQ+ and gender non-conforming community. Counseling services will include the option to engage in group supports with other members of this community.

• Work with partners to provide inclusive sex and gender education to all housing programs. We will ensure any new services like diversion or case management include a focus on how to support members of this population.

• Work with partners to put on additional community events to raise awareness and build a sense of community

- Engage affirming churches and organizations during the search for housing.

Minors Under 18

- Expand and better equip the homeless liaisons within each school district to identify youth in need or support by providing regular support and training.

- Expand college readiness services including help with FASFA, test prep, application fee waivers, and tutoring, especially in rural areas.

- Respect the autonomy of the youth by giving them the option to select either someone to accompany and advocate for them as they receive case management or choose who they want to be their case manager.

- Advocate for youth to choose what school they want to attend to the extent that is legally possible.

- Support youth choice in determining the kind of behavioral health support they want. For example, youth should be able to choose the type of therapy they want, whether that's art therapy, animal therapy, talk therapy, etc.

- We will also partner with family agencies to find supportive housing networks that are well trained and equipped to deal with the trauma associated with youth not having stable and safe housing.

Pregnant & Parenting Youth

- Pursue intentional partnerships with the organizations most likely to interface with this population like Planned Parenthood, local hospitals, WIC clinics, Infant Crisis Services, Sunbeam, Early Head Start, etc.

  •Identify braided funding in case a parenting couple no longer qualifies for HUD funding.

- Build and expand partnerships with childcare agencies in all counties to ensure childcare for working parents.

- Develop partnerships with high schools, colleges and vocational colleges to create or increase on-site childcare availability.

- Identify day and night childcare options.

- Expand rapid rehousing units that are move in ready and allow for both parents to live there and be involved for longer than two years, when the need for continued supportive housing is evident.

- Partner with family positive employers that offer flexible hours and/or other supports for pregnant/parenting youth

- Identify/create support groups for pregnant and parenting youth.

- Engage Legal Aid services or other potential resources to partner with youth and agencies in potential custody cases

Justice Involved Youth

- Strengthen partnerships with the Office of Juvenile Affairs and Oklahoma County Juvenile Bureau by engaging in regular planning meetings with probation officers and leadership staff.

- Create diversion and more upstream planning services by finding gaps in other system services (child welfare, education) and create timelines for accountability.

- Develop coordinated, standardized discharge planning approaches that are supported by a collaborative process to facilitate the transition from justice involvement to housing

- Provide supportive alternative education options including self-paced or online school.

- Address barriers related to criminal records and connect young people to legal services Increase data sharing with DJS on youth entering the criminal justice system from homelessness and exiting the criminal justice system into homelessness.

- Outreach to organizations that will specifically hire and support those with justice involvement.

Foster Care Involved Youth

• Build and strengthen partnership with Department of Human Services and National Resource Center for Youth Services.

• Strengthen relationships with CPS/CPI and develop strategies to improve housing options for youth aging out of the foster care system.

• Ensure consisting reporting from all mandated reporters by creating a process map and/or decision tree detailing what to do when working in specific situations with unaccompanied youth.

Victims of Sexual Trafficking, Exploitation & Violence

Oklahoma City has limited resources for survivors of trafficking and exploitation. While there are multiple local grassroots organizations that provide wraparound support to sex workers, there is still a need for a more coordinated streamlined approach to best support and center of efforts focused on preventing trafficking and supporting survivors.

• Connect youth to YWCA and/or Palomar if fleeing domestic violence, stalking or dating violence.

• Create scattered TH/RRH options that are especially secure and safe units that include security, cameras, locks and are in confidential locations; offer services provided by survivors of human trafficking.

• Identify and engage local agencies, including grassroots community groups and organizations serving sex workers and survivors of trafficking and exploitation to build active partnerships, connect them with legal services, provide homeless service providers with training and professional development and ensure quality services are available for youth of all genders.

• Implement harm reduction approaches and cultural competency around distinction between exploitation and sex work

• Provide trainings to all service providers including local churches, schools, college campuses, law enforcement, and emergency rooms, and including topics such as trauma bonding.

Positive Youth Development & Trauma-Informed Care

Positive Youth Development (PYD) is an approach to working with young people that focuses on their psychological, emotional and social development rather than problems or deficits.

PYD approaches will be used to support youth to improve their:

• Assets: Youth have the necessary resources, skills and capabilities to achieve their desired outcomes.

• Agency: Youth have the ability to employ their assets and aspiration to make or influence their own decisions, set their own goals and act on those decisions to achieve desired outcomes.

• Contribution: Youth are engaged as a source of change for their own and for their communities' positive development.

• Supportive environment: Youth are nurtured in an environment that develops their assets, agency, gives access to services and opportunities, while strengthening their ability to avoid risks, stay safe and live without fear of violence or retribution. We envision an environment that encourages and recognizes youth, while promoting their social and emotional competence to thrive.

Oklahoma City recognizes the severe impact and significance of trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) experienced by the youth we aim to serve through Oklahoma City's CCP. To begin healing and working toward self-sufficiency, we must promote consistent trauma-informed, culturally integrative care focused on mitigating future harm, improving youth's wellbeing, and increasing permanent connections.

Strategies to ensure a focus on Positive Youth Development in OKC:

- Prioritize clients' feelings of physical and psychological safety.

- Design positions for youth to be employed in as navigators, peer supports, and other positions throughout the youth housing and service system.

- Provide onboarding and annual training on adultism, youth-centered service models, and culturally integrated trainings.

- Support transparency in operations and decisions, and build trusting and supportive relationships amongst clients, staff, and the families of those served.

- Value youth voice and choice by a) taking an individualized, youth-driven approach b) focusing on youth as individuals and c) identifying and reinforcing strengths.

- Avoid judgement or advice-giving that can shut down learning processes, and instead collaborate with youth to develop alternative, positive approaches.

- Actively move past cultural stereotypes and biases, offer culturally integrative and responsive services and recognize and address historical trauma.

- Connect youth with opportunities to develop new skills, engage in productive activities and deepen support networks.

- Present opportunities for youth to set goals, determine action items and take the lead in both personal and community settings.

- Ensure youth voice and leadership in CoC decision making through the incorporation of the YAB and dedicated CoC Board seats for young people.

- Projects will be required to incorporate PYD into their program design and implementation.

- PYD training will be provided to all stakeholders and partners in the CoC.

- The community will continue to develop youth opportunities to have a voice by participation with the YAB or project specific opportunities.

Trauma-Informed Care

The unfortunate reality of youth homelessness is trauma is almost always a part of the experience. Much of this trauma goes unknown and untreated; homelessness compounds the severity of any accumulated trauma. Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) is an organizational structure and treatment framework that involves understanding, recognizing and responding to the effects of all types of trauma. It is important to recognize many behaviors and responses that may seem ineffective and unhealthy in the present, represent adaptive responses to past traumatic experiences.

TIC emphasizes physical, psychological and emotional safety for both youth and providers and helps to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment. These programs help young people recognize the presence of trauma symptoms, acknowledge the role trauma plays in their lives and cultivate healthy alternatives to trauma-based coping strategies. YHDP partners will organize youth services, opportunities and support in alignment with principles of TIC, with an awareness of the pervasive nature of trauma and work intentionally to avoid re-traumatization while promoting environments of healing and recovery.

To ensure Trauma-Informed Care is implemented throughout youth programs in Oklahoma City, we are committed to these strategies:

- Create integrative care by wokring with youth and young adults through a holistic lens, supporting their process of healing and facilitating communication within and among service providers and systems.

- Establish safe, authentic and positive relationships with youth and young adults that can be corrective and restorative to survivors of trauma.

- Entry into crisis and long-term services will promote physical and emotional safety among participants. Real and perceived threats to safety will be paramount and young people will be offered and referred to welcoming, culturally appropriate, and affirming program environments.

- Project staff and volunteers will be trained to build trust, honor young people's personal boundaries and allow youth to set the pace and limits to their individual relationships with peers and helping professionals.

- Youth will have agency to define themselves on their own terms and not be reduced to labels or past life experiences. Unhealthy relationships, high-risk sexual activity, substance use and self-harming behaviors will be understood in the context of trauma and not used to shame or stigmatize young people.

- Assessment, intakes and referral procedures will be done in way that protects youth privacy while allowing for data sharing and co-enrollment practices to prevent re-traumatization and limit the number of times young people are asked to share traumatic personal experiences.

Housing First

As one of the essential needs of human existence, every young person should have access to safe housing without barriers. Youth and young adults should be provided with rapid access to safe, secure and stable housing that meets their needs as quickly as possible, without the condition that they are "ready" for housing.

Our community values the importance of providing housing that is accessible without preconditions as housing ends homelessness. The CoC's Housing First philosophy for youth is not synonymous with "housing only." It is vital youth have a safe space to thrive and are offered the support in that housing to move to independent living.

To ensure our focus on Housing First, our community is committed to following these strategies:

- YHDP participating agencies will commit to Housing First principles, including low- or no-barrier access to safe, stable housing, communicating to the larger community housing first extends to youth who struggle with substance abuse or addiction, whether active or in recovery.

- Develop and require onboarding as well as annual training for staff to use progressive engagement techniques and motivational interviewing approaches to help youth identify individual goals, barriers to their success and available resources and services to help eliminate those barriers.

- YHDP participating agencies must complete regular training on Housing First principles, expectations and requirements.

- Provide landlords and community partners with information regarding Housing First principles.

- Develop a centralized youth housing advocacy portal through which youth can report and obtain assistance addressing legal and programmatic barriers to housing.

- Provide training for churches that want to serve as emergency crisis housing and offering non-religious housing options

- Increase youth-specific short-term and long-term supportive housing options designed to immediately stabilize youth in safe housing.

- Expand the network of aligned community resources and services to which youth experiencing homelessness are referred and improve coordination of service linkages.

Family Engagement

Permanent connections are essential to any individual's ability to thrive, regardless of age. For many, the most meaningful, unshakeable bonds are those with families of origin. For a large number of homeless youth and young adults, these bonds have been fractured by histories of abuse, neglect or rejection. Despite these occurrences, most youth experiencing homelessness locally indicate occasional or regular contact with their families of origin and most report the presence of other caring peers and older adults in their lives. If nurtured or repaired, these relationships can provide a foundation of support where young people can build healthy, supported and interdependent lives.

In the current youth housing system, family engagement is generally focused on family reunification with the greatest emphasis placed on reunifying unaccompanied youth under 18 with their families of origin. For older youth, family reunification is generally a self-directed activity. While general case management and counseling services are often available, there are few, if any, evidence-based and targeted strategies currently in use to promote family engagement. Our community believes the best diversion and intervention strategy is to engage families and chosen families, whenever appropriate, through community partnerships with organizations such as child welfare agencies, schools, youth providers and other community human services and homeless services providers.

To ensure Family Engagement is implemented throughout youth programs in Oklahoma City, we are committed to these strategies:

• Support youth as they clarify their personal goals and boundaries related to their relationships with their families of origin and of choice.

• Pursue reunification with family (when appropriate) as a form of diverting youth from entering the homeless response system.

• Provide and incorporate evidence-informed family engagement approaches and mediation as part of supportive services offered to all youth.

• Assist families with community resources, such as substance abuse treatment, mental health care and employment needs to help strengthen the home environment.

• Develop LGBTQ+ specific education, support and mediation for parent/guardians; faith-based community education to better support parents to understand their children who believe differently from them.

• Support and encourage youth to engage with their families when appropriate and honor young people's relationships with family members regardless of the perceived positive or negative influence on the youth.

Coordinated Entry for Youth

A youth-inclusive Coordinated Entry process is a systems-level, youth-focused approach for youth access, screening assessment, prioritization, and referral to housing and supportive services. Historically, our local Coordinated Entry System (CES), has been largely focused on adults experiencing homelessness. Oklahoma City is committed to developing and implementing a more youth-centered process that incorporates an assessment tool where questions are adjusted towards youth experiences to evaluate youth-specific vulnerability. This youth process will include expansion of marketing to youth-serving systems for referrals to Journey Home, identifying safe access points to Journey Home for youth, creating a youth prioritization list, and integrating referrals for youth to access supports within the community.

Stragegies to ensure youth focused coordinated entry is implemented efficiently throughout youth programs in OKC:

• All YHDP participating agencies will commit to use coordinated entry, to ensure entry into the housing continuum of care is coordinated and client driven.

• Develop a YYA by-name list and conducting YYA specific care coordination meetings;

• Create a specific prioritization path for YYA specific programs; and

• Work with the YAB to determine most appropriate access points for CES entry.

• Divert as many young people as possible who may be at risk of homelessness by connecting them to mainstream resources.

• Agencies will commit to participating in case conferencing of youth, to ensure youth are connected to the most appropriate services based on their need vulnerability and choice.

• Develop consistent onboarding and subsequent training for provider agencies who run access points, including how to administer the common assessment tool and how to properly input youth into HMIS for CES.

• Agencies will participate in annual evaluation of the coordinated entry process in order to improve upon the development of the youth CES.

• Create Continuous Quality Improvement strategies that will review CES data as a means of developing new strategies to prevent and end youth homelessness.

• Use the Continuous Quality Improvement to look at disparities amongst marginalized populations to ensures equity throughout the process of coordinated entry.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES & ACTION STEPS

We will use our communities' values of youth choice, inclusivity, trust, empathy and respect are the core values driving Oklahoma City's shared vision to end youth homelessness. We envision our city as a place where every youth and young adult has access to proactive preventive services and a choice of prompt, safe and low-barrier housing options.

The Goals, Objectives and Action Steps in our CCP focus on a collaborative, strategic and youth-led approach for the community to prevent and end homelessness among youth and young adults. When we accomplish our goals, housing and supportive services will be youth- and data-driven, equitable, transparent, intentional, innovative, sustainable and well-coordinated. We will engage our community in a culturally integrative and trauma-informed way while using a positive youth development approach.

GOAL 1: Identify all unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness or those at-risk of homelessness in OKC

Obejective	Action
Community uses standardized methods to successfully identify all youth experiencing homelessness and those at-risk.	**1.** Design and implement a screening and assessment tool to be used to identify all youth and young adults who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness, including those in schools, child welfare or juvenile justice custody. **Partners:** City of OKC, YHDP Implementation Team, YHDP Grantee Parnters & YAB. **Timeframe:** 2023-24. **2.** Recruit and train stakeholders (local business, schools, churches, libraries, service providers) to identify and connect youth to the existing youth homelessness system. **Partners:** City of OKC, YHDP Implementation Team & YHDP Grantee Parnters. **Timeframe:** 2022-23. **3.** Deploy a youth dedicated street outreach team into the community to connect with unsheltered or discounted youth and young adults. **Partners:** YHDP Grantee Sisu Youth Services & MHA OK. **Timeframe:** 2022-23. **4.** Train existing homeless street outreach teams on strategies for successful youth engagement. **Partners:** City of OKC, YHDP Implementation Team, YHDP Grantee Sisu Youth Services & MHA OK. **Timeframe:** 2022-23. **5.** Develop and implement data sharing agreements between schools, child welfare, juvenile justice, and the Continuum of Care in order to identify youth at risk of homelessness. **Partners:** City of OKC, YHDP Implementation Team & Homeless Youth Alliance. **Timeframe:** 2023-24. **6.** Expand the Youth Point in Time Count to include two events per year. **Partners:** City of OKC, YHDP Implementation Team, Homeless Youth Alliance & YAB. **Timeframe:** 2022-23. **7.** Track housing location prior to program entry through HMIS. **Partners:** City of OKC, YHDP Grantee Partners. **Timeframe:** 2022-23. **8.** Target outreach efforts to communities who experience homelessness at disproportionate rates including minors, LGBTQ+, youth of color, and systems involved youth. **Partners:** YHDP Grantee Sisu Youth Services, MHA OK, HYA & YAB. **Timeframe:** 2022-23.
Use a marketing and social media campaign to publicize resources for youth, in particular those not engaged in services.	**1.** Solicit feedback from youth with lived experience about the type of marketing strategies that will have the largest impact. **Partners:** YHDP Implementation Team, YHDP Grantee Parnters, HYA & YAB. **Timeframe:** 2022-23. **2.** Create a YHDP specific website to share information, resources, and plans. **Partners:** City of OKC, YHDP Implementation Team, YHDP Grantee Parnters & YAB. **Timeframe:** 2022-23. **3.** Explore possibilities of partnering with a marketing class from a local university to help guide the process including use of interns and potential training opportunities for YAB members who may have a desire to learn more about marketing. **Partners:** YHDP Grantee Partners & YAB. **Timeframe:** 2022-23. **4.** Engage the YAB to determine marketing strategy, including the needs and goals. **Partners:** City of OKC, YHDP Implementation Team & YAB. **Timeframe:** 2022-23.

GOAL2: Provide immediate, low barrier access to crisis housing and services through the use of prevention and diversion strategies

Obejective	Action
Improve discharge policies and increase support to reduce the number of individuals exiting institutions and systems to homelessness.	**1.** Establish contacts at hospitals, mental health facilities, Juvenile Justice, Department of Human Services and other organizations responsible for discharge planning. **Partners:** City of OKC, YHDP Implementation Team Work Group. **Timeframe:** 2023-24. **2.** Collaborate with above agencies to establish standardized discharge processes through a data-sharing agreement. **Partners:** City of OKC, HYA, YHDP Grantee Partners. **Timeframe:** 2023-24. **3.** Determine service organizations and discharge entity staff to facilitate collaboration for discharges. **Partners:** City of OKC, HYA, YHDP Grantee Partners. **Timeframe:** 2023-24.
Unaccompanied Youth and young adults who are at risk of homelessness will have access to streamlined prevention and diversion services	**1.** Identify best practices for diversion strategies. **Partners:** YHDP Implementation Team, YHDP Grantee Partners, Hope Community Services & YAB. **Timeframe:** 2022-23. **2.** Approve standardized community-wide approach to diversion practices. **Partners:** YHDP Implementation Team, YHDP Grantee Partners & YAB. **Timeframe:** 2022-23. **3.** Implement diversion screening at all provider sites to identify existing support to divert youth and young adults from becoming homeless through chosen family and natural supports, case management and direct cash transfer. **Partners:** City of OKC, YHDP Grantee Partners, HYA & YAB. **Timeframe:** 2023-24. **4.** Create and implement prevention and diversion training for all YHDP providers and community partners. **Partners:** City of OKC, YHDP Grantee Partners, HYA & YAB. **Timeframe:** 2022-23. **5.** Ensure emergency shelter beds are available for all identified unsheltered youth who request shelter. **Partners:** YHDP Grantee Partners. **Timeframe:** 2023-24. **6.** Increase community and youth awareness of available resources through social media campaigns. **Partners:** City of OKC, YHDP Implementation Team &YHDP Grantees. **Timeframe:** 2023-24. **7.** Develop Continuous Quality Improvement process to monitor success of diversion strategies and make recommendations for improved approaches. **Partners:** City of OKC, YHDP Implementation Team, HYA &YAB. **Timeframe:** 2023-24.
Develop a Family Engagement model and mediation services to help youth remain or return to their chosen family.	**1.** Increase capacity for staffing to implement Family Engagement practices. **2.** Introduce Family Engagement model to the community through training of all YHDP services providers and other stakeholders.

GOAL 3: Use the coordinated entry process to effectively link all youth experiencing homelessness to housing and services tailored to their needs.

Obejective	Action
All youth and young adults experiencing homelessness have access to live-referral system, including real-time identification of housing placement options.	**1.** Have a clear coordinated entry process that is communicated to the community. **Partners:** City of OKC, Homeless Alliance & YHDP Implementation Team. **Timeframe:** 2022-23. **2.** Identify and engage all organizations that provide housing and services to youth and young adults who may not be participating in coordinated entry and encourage participation. **Partners:** City of OKC, Homeless Alliance, YHDP Implementation Team, YHDP Grantee Partners, HYA & YAB. **Timeframe:** 2023-24. **3.** Involve the YAB in the coordinated entry process to ensure youth voice and youth choice are prevalent through Continuous Quality Improvement processes. **Partners:** YHDP Implementation Team, YAB & YHDP Grantee Partners. **Timeframe:** 2022-23. **4.** Conduct regular coordinated case management meetings where youth are prioritized for existing housing resources. **Partners:** YHDP Grantee Partners & HYA. **Timeframe:** 2022-23. **5.** Conduct system-wide training on the Coordinated Entry System at least quarterly. **Partners:** City of OKC, Homeless Alliance & HYA. **Timeframe:** 2022-23. **6.** Include all identified youth on the community wide by-name list for housing placement. **Partners:** City of OKC, Homeless Alliance, HYA & YHDP Implementation Team. **Timeframe:** 2022-23.
Tailor housing and services to effectively address the needs identified by youth.	**1.** Have adequate housing options for all homeless youth and young adults especially special populations such as minors, LGTBQ+, pregnant and parenting. **Partners:** YHDP Implementation Team & YHDP Grantee Partners. **Timeframe:** 2023-24. **2.** Conduct ongoing training on Adultism and Youth Choice for all youth service providers. **Partners:** City of OKC, YHDP Implementation Team, YHDP Grantee Partners, HYA, YAB & True Colors United. **Timeframe:** 2022-23.

GOAL 4: Act with urgency to assist youth to move into permanent, non-time-limited housing options with appropriate services and supports.

Obejective	Action
Improve the response system so it quickly prioritizes youth to ensure placement in housing of their choice to decrease the amount of time they experience homelessness.	**1.** Prioritize youth subsidy applications, including Housing Choice Vouchers, as emergency to allow for faster processing. **Partners:** YHDP Implementation Work Group & YHDP Implementation Grantee Partners. **Timeframe:** 2023-24. **2.** Involve youth in the development of all housing and support services available to make sure they are youth centered. **Partners:** YHDP Implementation Work Group, YHDP Implementation Grantee Partners & YAB. **Timeframe:** 2022-23. **3.** Develop prioritization policy to ensure equitable access to all community resources. **Partners:** City of OKC, Continuous Quality Improvement Committee & YAB. **Timeframe:** 2023-24. **4.** Conduct Housing First training for all staff as part of their onboarding process. **Partners:** YHDP Implementation Work Group, YHDP Implementation Grantee Partners & YAB. **Timeframe:** 2023-24. **5.** Develop a Continuous Quality Improvement process where fidelity to the housing first model is continuously evaluated. **Partners:** YHDP Implementation Work Group, Continuous Quality Improvement Committee, HYA & YAB. **Timeframe:** 2022-23.
Increase the number of housing units and options available to youth.	**1.** Have real-time housing inventory list connected to the Coordinated Entry System. **Partners:** City of OKC, YHDP Implementation Team & YHDP Grantee Partners. **Timeframe:** 2022-23. **2.** Create landlord engagement teams. **Partners:** City of OKC, YHDP Implementation Team & YHDP Grantee Partners. **Timeframe:** 2022-23. **3.** Conduct a landlord engagement campaign to build relationships with landlords who have affordable housing units they are willing to rent to youth and young adults. **Partners:** City of OKC, YHDP Implementation Team & YHDP Grantee Partners. **Timeframe:** 2022-23. **4.** Identify funding sources to provide landlord incentives. **Partners:** YHDP Grantee Part-ners. **Timeframe:** 2022-23.

GOAL 5: The community has resources, plans and system capacity in place to continue to prevent and quickly end future experiences of homelessness for youth and young adults.

Obejective	Action
Community will collaborate and strategically align resources.	**1.** The CoC/YHDP Lead Agency should work to increase awareness and regularly convene the community on sustain existing systems. **Partners:** CoC & City of OKC. **Timeframe:** 2022-23.
	2. Identify housing and services gaps in the current system. **Partners:** CoC, City of OKC, YHDP Partner Grantees & YAB. **Timeframe:** 2022-23.
	3. Build system capacity by providing additional resources and stakeholders. **Partners:** YCoC & City of OKC. **Timeframe:** 2022-23.
	4. Develop partnerships with stakeholders including child welfare, schools, juvenile justice, youth community centers, service providers, employment and alternative education programs to coordinate existing services. **Partners:** CoC, City of OKC & YHDP Partner Grantees. **Timeframe:** 2022-23.
	5. Identify funding opportunities available that would benefit the community and select the best potential applicant to apply to funding or lead collaborative effort. **Partners:** CoC & City of OKC. **Timeframe:** 2023-24.
Tailor housing and services to effectively address the needs identified by youth.	**1.** Develop non-time limited and cross organization case management. **Partners:** City of OKC, YHDP Implementation Team & YHDP Partner Grantees. **Timeframe:** 2023-24.
	2. Identify standardized caseload size across all housing and support programs. **Partners:** City of OKC, YHDP Implementation Team & YHDP Partner Grantees. **Timeframe:** 2023-24.
	3. Research methods of providing community-based case management, where a youth or young adult would remain with the same case manager despite their housing plan. **Partners:** YHDP Implementation Team, YHDP Partner Grantees & YAB. **Timeframe:** 2023-24.

GOAL 6: Youth and young adults experiencing homelessness will have improved access to education, employment and medical/dental/behavioral health care.

Obejective	Action
Through strategic partnerships services are provided onsite or at locations youth see as appropriate	**1.** Prioritize youth subsidy applications, including Housing Choice Vouchers, as emergency to allow for faster processing. **Partners:** YHDP Grantee Partners & HYA. **Timeframe:** 2023-24. **2.** Involve youth in the development of all housing and support services available to make sure they are youth centered. **Partners:** YHDP Grantee Partners, HYA & YAB. **Timeframe:** 2022-23. **3.** Develop prioritization policy to ensure equitable access to all community resources. **Partners:** City of OKC, YHDP Implementation Team, Continuous Quality Improvement & YAB. **Timeframe:** 2023-24. **4.** Conduct Housing First training for all staff as part of their onboarding process. **Partners:** YHDP Grantee Partners & YAB. **Timeframe:** 2022-23. **5.** Develop a Continuous Quality Improvement process where fidelity to the housing first model is continuously evaluated. **Partners:** City of OKC & Continuous Quality Improvement Committee. **Timeframe:** 2023-24.
Identify the needs of youth and young adults and existing resources and gaps in system	**1.** Conduct ongoing assessments of needs of youth and young adults in the community through data analysis and focus groups or surveys. **Partners:** YHDP Implementation Work Group, YAB & YHDP Grantee Partners. **Timeframe:** 2023-24. **2.** Conduct a full gaps analysis. **Partners:** City of OKC & YHDP Implementation Work Group. **Timeframe:** 2023-24.
Provide access to activities that increase independence and self-efficiency (ie employment, education, medical/behavioral)	**1.** Conduct needs assessment of youth and young adults to operate independently. **Partners:** City of OKC & YHDP Implementation Team. **Timeframe:** 2023-24. **2.** Create a training series to outline strategies that foster independence. **Partners:** YHDP Implementation Work Group, HYA & YAB. **Timeframe:** 2023-24. **3.** Host gathering of top 10 local youth and young adult employers to discuss ways of supporting youth to paths of self-sufficiency. **Partners:** YHDP Grantee Partners & YHDP Implementation Team, YAB. **Timeframe:** 2023-24. **4.** Host a job fair for youth and young adults experiencing homelessness. **Partners:** YHDP Implementation Work Group & YHDP Grantee Partners. **Timeframe:** 2023-24. **5.** Host quarterly education forums. **Partners:** YHDP Implementation Work Group & HYA. **Timeframe:** 2023-24. **6.** Approach local hospitals and clinics about bringing in YAB members to educate staff on promoting independence and self-sufficiency in youth. **Partners:** City of OKC & YHDP Implementation Team. **Timeframe:** 2023-24.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Oklahoma City's YHDP decision-making process involves a broad group of stakeholders including the Homeless Youth Alliance, Youth Action Board and the Continuum of Care Board. This governance structure is specific to youth homelessness efforts in our community including approval of the Coordinated Community Plan (CCP), YHDP project selection and oversight for Continuous Quality Improvement.
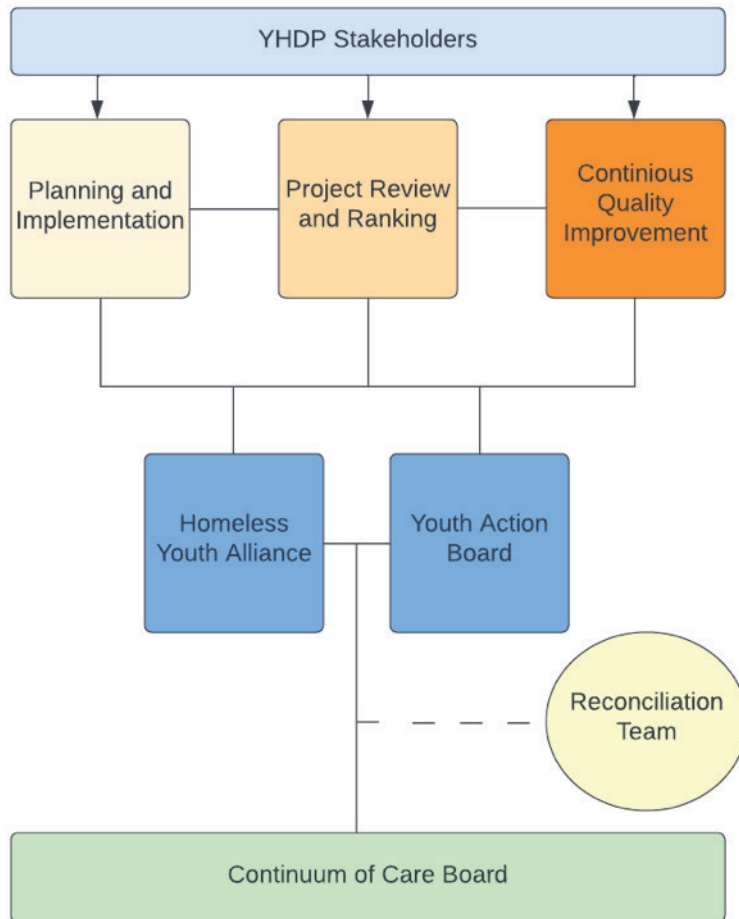
YHDP Stakeholders Group

The YHDP Stakeholders include YAB members, social service and housing agencies, education partners, local foundations and staff from the CoC Lead Agency. This group was responsible for implementing the YHDP processes and developing the CCP. The group met weekly throughout the planning process. Once the CCP is approved by HUD and the YHDP projects are funded, all YHDP related work will shift to the identified workgroups of the Homeless Youth Alliance and YAB.

Homeless Youth Alliance

The Homeless Youth Alliance (HYA) was created as one of the Committees of the CoC. Its membership includes over 20 stakeholders including YAB members, child welfare, juvenile justice, education providers, local government and youth serving agencies. Voting membership is available to all community members, organizations, business, agencies, associations, institutions and individuals who support the mission of the HYA and are in good standing. An individual or organization is considered in good standing if they have previously attended at least one meeting and since then have attended 75% of meetings. Each organization may only have one voting member. If the voting member is absent the backup member from that organization will cast the vote for the organization. HYA is lead by an Executive Team comprised of five members. The Executive Team shall serve no more than a two-year term. The Executive Team is nominated and elected by a vote of the HYA voting members. The duties of the Executive Team include leading HYA meetings and activities, overseeing the work of committees and workgroups developed by the HYA, scheduling meetings, sending notices, preparing written agendas, and documenting meeting minutes. The Executive Team is tasked with ensuring the mission, vision and work of the HYA align with the CCP. HYA is supported by a staff member from the CoC Lead Agency.

Youth Action Board

The Youth Action Board (YAB) was formed over five years ago. Its voting membership includes 23 members with lived experience of homelessness, housing instability or foster care. Special populations overrepresented in these populations including BIPOC, LGTBQ+ and the differently abled are all represented on the board. Members are considered in good standing if they have attended one meeting out of the last four.

The YAB is youth-led with five democratically elected youth/young adult leadership roles and two non-youth/young adult advisors from the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. YAB leadership terms are up to two years and are limited to three terms (two consecutive). The duties of the YAB leadership are to represent the YAB on the CoC Board, liaise with the Homeless Youth Alliance, serve on the YHDP Core Planning Team, lead YAB meetings, plan, develop, direct YAB goals in accordance with the YAB vision, monitor attendance, direct outreach and recruitment and lead subcommittees.

The YAB's vision is all youth and young adults will be provided with accessible and equitable support to make youth homelessness as brief as possible. Its core values are equity, generosity, integrity, a right to safety, leadership with compassion and empathy.

Continuum of Care Board

The Continuum of Care (CoC) Board serves as the decision-making body of the Continuum of Care by approving all items related to homeless services as well as setting funding priorities and identifying data and service needs. The Board is comprised of an objective and informed group of stakeholders including a member of the Youth Action Board and supported by staff from the CoC Lead Agency. The CoC Board approves the final Coordinated Community Plan (CCP) and YHDP Project Applications rankings as determined by the YHDP Ranking and Review Committee. All decisions by the CoC Board are made by a majority vote.

Oklahoma City is currently undertaking a significant restructuring process with Clutch Consulting Group that will reshape both CoC governance and the homeless services system. The intent of this process is to align public and private resources to address targeted objectives, improve the coordinated entry system and make it more robust and better prioritize services to address the areas of greatest need. This improved, more efficient service system could lead to Oklahoma City seeing dramatic, sustained reductions in homelessness. The YHDP planning team and YAB participated in every step of the planning process, and the youth voice will remain a prominent role in decision making and service planning through permanent positions in the new governing structure.

Committees/Work Groups

Planning & Implementation

The Planning and Implementation Committee is a working group comprised of members of the YAB, HYA and the CoC. The Committee is designed to support the implementation of the CCP. They will be responsible for ensuring the Goals, Objectives and Action Steps identified in the CCP are carried out. This Committee will be responsible for taking the recommendation of the Continuous Quality Improvement Committee and updating the CCP as needed.

Project Review & Ranking

Four members appointed by the YAB and three members appointed by the HYA make up the Project Review and Ranking Committee. This Committee is charged with developing the Oklahoma City YHDP Request for Proposals (RFP), Application and Scoring Tool. In addition to development of the documents, the Review and Ranking Committee is responsible for reviewing and scoring all project applications. The Committee then presents their recommendations to the YAB and HYA for their acceptance of the rankings. The final rankings are then presented to the CoC Board for final approval.

Continuous Quality Improvement

The Continuous Quality Improvement Committee will be comprised of members of the CoC, HYA, YAB and the YHDP Lead Agency. The Committee will meet at least quarterly to survey feedback and data to assess progress on a project level in relation to the CCP goals. The Committee will collectively determine project and system effectiveness, make recommendations for technical assistance and updates to the CCP as necessary.

YHDP NEW PROJECTS

All projects must meet the following requirements:

Address the unique needs of these youth and young adult populations:

• LGBTQ+

• Pregnant and Parenting Youth & Young Adults

• Youth in Child Welfare custody

• Youth & Young Adults in the Juvenile/Adult Justice System

• Minorities

• Survivors of Trafficking & Exploitation

Additional requirements:

• Be located and/or able to provide services in OKC Continuum of Care (OK-502) geographic area

• Adhere to Housing First practices while serving households experiencing homelessness

• Participate in YHDP Technical Assistance

• Collect data and participate in HMIS

• Participate in and accept all new program referrals from the Oklahoma City Coordinated Entry System

• Participate in the on-going Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process

• Provide services in a safe, affirming, and inclusive environment

• Transportation support should be built into all programs.

• Recruit and hire a young person, under 25 years old, who has lived expertise of homelessness/housing instability and who reflect the population served at an FTE of no less than .5FTE. at a rate of no less than $16.13 per hour. The job description must be approved by YAB, before project start date. The organization must also develop a pipeline or realistic professional ladder of succession that make any individual serving in this role eligible to be promoted or laterally positioned in a paid role of equal or greater capacity once they feel ready and are far above the young adult age range.

• Attend monthly HYA meetings.

• All grant funds must be matched an amount no less than 25% of the awarded grant amount (excluding the amount awarded to the leasing but line item) with case or in-kind resources.

• Recipients of CoC-YHDP funds are required to have a person with lived experience on their board/equivalent policy making body. The lived experience must be within seven years of being appointed to the board/equivalent policy making body.

• Must have policies and procedures in place for training all staff on cultural inclusiveness and how to support marginalized populations including LGBTQ+ youth, youth of color, unique needs of category 4 youth including safety planning, youth behavioral or mental health disability, youth with various cultural backgrounds, etc.

PROJECT 1: Supportive Services Only Drop-In Centers

Funding	Approximately $350,000-$1,000,000 over an initial 2-year period (does not include 25% matching funds)
CoC Project Type	Supportive Service Only
Eligible Activities	Client food and services, building operations, drop-in center and outreach staff
Target Population	Unaccompanied Youth, Under 18 Unaccompanied Youth, 18-24 years old Pregnant/Parenting Youth, Under 18 Pregnant and Parenting Youth, 18-24 years old Youth At Risk of Homelessness, Under 18 Youth At Risk of Homelessness, 18-24 years old
Participant Timeframe	Non-time limited
Needs Met	Immediate needs such as food, showers, laundry, clothing and hygiene supplies. Connections to peers and other community members. Prevention and service referral.
Description	Youth dedicated drop-in centers provide a safe, affirming space in which youth can rest, shower, eat and ultimately build trust that may lead to deeper engagement and connection to housing and support services. The project should provide prevention, navigation and outreach services through a wraparound approach. In addition to meeting immediate needs, drop-in projects should also include access to computers, employment/education programs, life skills classes and recreation activities. Oklahoma City has existing youth drop-in centers with limited hours. YHDP funding must be used to support new programs in the community. The funding can be used to allow existing or other facilities to open for new services and programs but cannot fund existing services.
Requirements	Provide consistent outreach to youth and young adults who are at risk or experiencing homelessness through a youth-dedicated street outreach team. • Drop-in services will be provided by Agency staff or through partnerships with community providers.
Expected Outcomes	1. Increase the number of youth identified as homeless or at risk through outreach efforts. 2. Provide immediate, safe access to services and support so the basic needs of youth and young adults at risk or experiencing homelessness are met. 3. Decrease the amount of time youth and young adults spend unstably housed. 4. Support youth in achieving self-identified goals around education, employment, health, financial and well-being.
OKC Goal & Objective	Goal 1, Objective 1
USICH Outcome(s) Addressed	Social-Emotional Well-Being, Permanent Connections and Stable Housing

PROJECT 2: Supportive Services Only Diversion/Family Engagement

Funding	Appx. $350,000-$1,000,000 over an initial 2-year period (does not include 25% matching funds)
CoC Project Type	Supportive Service Only
Eligible Activities	Financial assistance (Rental application fees, utility deposits, client food, transportation. May include flexible financial support through stipends to support food and transportation costs associated with a young person in housing.
Target Population	Unaccompanied Youth, Under 18 Unaccompanied Youth, 18-24 years old Pregnant/Parenting Youth, Under 18 Pregnant and Parenting Youth, 18-24 years old
Participant Timeframe	Up to six months
Needs Met	Crisis intervention. Connection to supportive services and housing resources.
Description	A diversion and/or family engagement project will provide case management that connects and mediate between youth and young adults and their chosen family. Youth and young adults will be connected to or assisted in retaining safe and stable housing. Supportive services could include mental health counseling, transportation and food assistance.
Requirements	• Provide services in Oklahoma City. • Participate in the Coordinated Entry System. • Participate in the Homeless Youth Alliance. • Participate in the Continuum of Care. • Provide services in a safe, affirming, and inclusive environment. • Provide individualized conflict resolution/medication (including family-focused support) centered around youth choice. • Provide services to youth in different setting types, including schools, libraries, drop-in center as well as over the phone, email or social media.
Expected Outcomes	1. Reduce the number of youth and young adults becoming homeless for the first time. 2. Reduce the length of time youth and young adults spend in emergency shelter. 3. Support youth in achieving self-identified goals around education, employment, health, financial and well-being.
OKC Goal & Objective	Goal 2, Objective 2 Goal 2, Objective 3
USICH Outcome(s) Addressed	Social-Emotional Well-Being, Permanent Connections and Stable Housing

PROJECT 3: Supportive Services Only Host Homes Project

Funding	Approximately $40,000-$100,000 over an initial 2-year period (does not include 25% matching funds)
CoC Project Type	Supportive Service Only
Eligible Activities	Supportive Services Costs
Target Population	Unaccompanied Youth, Under 18 Unaccompanied Youth, 18-24 years old Pregnant/Parenting Youth, Under 18 Pregnant and Parenting Youth, 18-24 years old
Participant Timeframe	Up to six months
Needs Met	Crisis housing and supportive services
Description	Host Homes are an innovative approach that provide short-term housing in the homes of community volunteers or chosen family and friends of youth and young adults. Host homes are an alternative to emergency shelter. Host Homes are not a foster care placement through Department of Human Services (DHS).
Requirements	Conduct youth-driven host home matching
Expected Outcomes	1. Decrease the amount of time youth and young adults spend unstably housed. 2. Support youth in achieving self-identified goals around housing, education, employment, health, financial and well-being. 3. Decrease the number of youth and young adults who return to homelessness.
OKC Goal & Objective	Goal 2, Objective 3 Goal 3, Objective 2
USICH Outcome(s) Addressed	Social-Emotional Well-Being, Permanent Connections, Stable Housing and Education/Employment.

PROJECT 4: Joint Transitional Housing- Rapid Re-Housing (TH-RRH) Project

Funding	Approximately $900,000 over an initial 2-year period (does not include 25% matching funds)
CoC Project Type	Transitional Housing and Rapid Re-Housing (TH-RRH)
Eligible Activities	Operating costs associated with Transitional Housing including, rent, utilities, insurance, food for participants and other basic costs to manage the project. Supportive Services Costs. Rental Assistance.
Target Population	Unaccompanied Youth, Under 18 Unaccompanied Youth, 18-24 years old Pregnant/Parenting Youth, Under 18 Pregnant and Parenting Youth, 18-24 years old
Participant Timeframe	Up to 2 years in TH Up to 2 years in RH A waiver to provide assistance up to 3 years can be requested.
Needs Met	Crisis and permanent housing. Case management, life skills
Description	Includes both transitional housing and rapid re-housing. Youth may choose to use only the transitional housing or the rapid re-housing component of the project or both. The transitional portion of the project should be short term without housing preconditions. It should provide a safe place to stay and wrap-around services as needed by the youth and youth adults. The project could be individual apartments in the same building or private rooms that offer shared spaces. Pregnant and parenting youth should have access to more independent options, including units with sufficient space for their children. Projects must allow pregnant and parenting youth to be served as a household, despite marital status. The rapid re-housing portion places the youth or young adult in their own apartment of their choice in the community. The project should assist with landlord engagement and housing identification. Youth and young adults should have access to financial assistance for move-in costs, rental assistance and case management services. When needed a youth should be allowed to move back to the transitional housing for additional support and to reestablish a permanent housing plan.
Requirements	• Provide intense case management with a caseload ratio of 1:15. • Be able to provide both components to all participants. • Required to serve all genders. • Any participant rules/guidelines should be in place for safety, not control.
Expected Outcomes	1. Decrease the amount of time youth and young adults spend unstably housed. 2. Increase the number of youth and young adults who exit homelessness to permanent housing. 3. Decrease the number of returns to homelessness. 4. Support youth in achieving self-identified goals around housing, education, employment, health, financial and well-being.
OKC Goal & Objective	Goal 4, Objective 1
USICH Outcome(s) Addressed	Social-Emotional Well-Being, Permanent Connections, Stable Housing and Education/Employment.

PROJECT 5: Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Project

Funding	Approximately $600,000 over an initial 2-year period (does not include 25% matching funds)
CoC Project Type	Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)
Eligible Activities	Leasing, Rental Assistance, Operations, Supportive Services
Target Population	Unaccompanied Youth, 18-24 years old Pregnant and Parenting Youth, 18-24 years old
Participant Timeframe	Non-time limited
Needs Met	Permanent Housing, Case Management
Description	Permanent Supportive Housing projects provide housing assistance and a wide variety of supportive services for youth and young adults with mental health, physical health and substance abuse disorders who identify needing comprehensive supportive services. Permanent housing units may be provided either through master leased or scattered site rental units.
Requirements	• Any participant rules/guidelines should be in place for safety, not control. • Master leased units should be in neighborhoods youth and young adults desire and deem safe. • Discharges are only allowed for lease violations.
Expected Outcomes	1. Decrease the amount of time youth and young adults spend unstably housed. 2. Decrease the number of returns to homelessness. 3. Support youth in achieving self-identified goals around housing, education, employment, health, financial and well-being.
OKC Goal & Objective	Goal 4, Objective 1
USICH Outcome(s) Addressed	Social-Emotional Well-Being, Permanent Connections, Stable Housing and Education/Employment.

CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Our community acknowledges we must always work to monitor and evaluate the results of our system to ensure our work continues to meet the vision and values of our diverse community. To effectively implement our CCP, the CoC Board, HYA and YAB, in collaboration with the CQI Committee, will evaluate and monitor planning efforts and related projects to track progress and ensure success. The CQI Committee will be tasked to implement the quality improvement process through regularly collecting and analyzing data and identifying and testing change strategies. The CQI process will encourage regular, evidence-driven discussions among all stakeholders.

Our community views the CCP as a living document that will continue to develop as we add new stakeholders and resources to our community. The plan will be updated as we learn more about our systems and evaluate outcomes of new programs.

A continuous quality improvement process is critical to the effective implementation of the CCP and individual YHDP projects. The CoC Board, HYA, and YAB will work closely with the City of Oklahoma City Homeless Services and community partners to:

- Develop an annual work-plan and track progress on implementation of CCP activities and make modifications as necessary.

- Evaluate project and system performance and design and implement monitoring standards for the YHDP project and individually funded projects.

- Establish project and system performance measures and benchmarks for YHDP annual applications and other youth-centered projects.

- Incorporate YHDP principles into evaluation policies and protocols.

- Design technical assistance and training to support the implementation of YHDP principles and activities within and across projects.

- Report on YHDP progress quarterly to the CoC Board.

- Hold youth-centered and general community forums to share updates and get feedback from public stakeholders.

- As sub-recipients of the YHDP Lead Agency, the City of Oklahoma City, all YHDP funded projects will be subject to formal monitoring. The City of Oklahoma City will collaborate with the HYA and YAB on the design of YHDP monitoring requirements.

- The YHDP Operations Team will conduct semiannual presentations to the CoC Board, various CoC Committees and the YHDP stakeholders related to system performance impacts, opportunities for improvement and emerging system-level strategies.

Project Monitoring and Evaluation Oklahoma City Coordinated Community Plan

The YAB will be invited to participate in the implementation of YHDP project monitoring. On a quarterly basis, the City of Oklahoma City will partner with the HYA to review YHDP project implementation progress, assess outcomes, and offer technical assistance. YHDP funded projects will be required to collaborate with the CoC on the development and implementation of mechanisms to solicit feedback from YHDP project participants. Options may include town hall meetings, secure comment boxes, participant surveys, focus groups or collaborative planning sessions and the establishment of a youth advisory board. Youth Voice YHDP funded providers will be expected to designate representatives to participate actively on the HYA.

Review & Updates

The CQI Committee and HYA will conduct an annual joint review of the CCP, progress to date and the current state of youth homelessness in Oklahoma City. This annual review will include updates on all planned goals, objectives and action steps as well as the identification of emerging or unanticipated opportunities to accelerate local efforts to prevent and end youth homelessness. The joint committee will issue proposed revisions to the full YHDP stakeholder group and collect feedback and recommendations. A final set of revisions, based on all feedback received, will be submitted to the YAB, HYA and CoC Board for approval. Upon approval, the annual CCP update will be published and shared with local youth agencies, CoC members, YHDP stakeholders, local leaders and HUD.

PARTNERSHIPS

YHDP Partner	Name	Involvement
Youth Action Board (YAB	Oklahoma City Youth Action Board	Members of the YAB have been an integral part of the YHDP process since the beginning. They helped draft the YHPD application. YAB members have been involved in the writing of the CCP, including development of Vision and Values, Governance, and identifying projects to be funded by YHPP. YAB members are on the Ranking and Review, Continuous Quality Improvement and the Planning and Implementation Committee. YAB members will continue to play a role in the implementation of the CCP, including providing training to staff at youth serving agencies.
Child Welfare	Oklahoma Department of Health and Human Services (OKDHS)	OKDHS is the child welfare agency for the State of Oklahoma. They assisted in the writing of the CCP, including providing data and information for the Statement of Need. They will continue to provide data for and insight into youth exiting foster care.
CoC and ESG Program Recipients	Homeless Alliance	Leads the Community's Coordinated Entry System (CES), including Youth Coordinated Case Management meetings. Participated in development of the CCP. Will continue to evaluate and work to improve the CES to ensure it is inclusive, equitable and youth driven.
	Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma	Participated in the development of the CCP. Will be involved in the implementation of the CCP in the aspect of addressing the legal needs of youth and young adults experiencing homelessness.
	Upward Transitions	Participated in the development of the CCP. Will be involved in the implementation of the CCP through assistance with getting id and vital documents.
	HOPE Community Services	Participated in the development of the CCP. Will be involved in the implementation of the CCP through connection to mental health services and housing supports.
	HeartLine 211	Participated in the development of the CCP. Will be involved in the implementation of the CCP through resource development, tracking and referrals.
Local and State Government	City of Oklahoma City Homeless Services	Collaborative Applicant for Oklahoma City CoC. Helped develop the CCP. Will ensure youth voice is present at all meetings for the refinement of the youth homeless system.
	Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth	Participated in the development of the CCP. Identified partners to include in YHDP discussion. Will help coordinated implementation with state agencies.
	Governor's Interagency Council on Homelessness	Participated in the development of the CCP. Will ensure youth voice is present in meetings for the refinement of the youth homeless system.

YHDP Partner	Name	Involvement
Runaway and Homeless Youth Program Providers	Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services	Serve as support staff to the Youth Action Board. Participated in the development of the CCP. Will ensure youth voice is present in meetings for the refinement of the youth homeless system. Will continue to work to ensure funding sources in the community align with the CCP.
	Sisu Youth	Provides Emergency Shelter, Drop-In services and Transitional Living for youth and young adults experiencing homelessness. Will work to align agency policies and procedures with the CCP.
Health, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse Agencies	Northcare	Participated in the development of the CCP. Will work to connect youth and young adults with mental health, physical healthcare and housing.
Juvenile and Adult Corrections and Probation	Oklahoma Juvenile Authority (OJA)	OJA is the juvenile justice agency for the State of Oklahoma. They assisted in the writing of the CCP, including providing data and information for the Statement of Need. They will continue to provide data for and insight into youth with juvenile justice involvement.
	Oklahoma County Juvenile Bureau	The Juvenile Bureau is the juvenile justice agency for Oklahoma County. They assisted in the writing of the CCP, including providing data and information for the Statement of Need. They will continue to provide data for and insight into youth with juvenile justice involvement.
Local and State Law Enforcement and Judges	Oklahoma City Police Department Homeless Outreach Team	Will connect youth to the Coordinated Entry System and crisis services.
	HeartLine 211	Participated in the development of the CCP. Will be involved in the implementation of the CCP through resource development, tracking and referrals.
Public Housing Authorities	Oklahoma City Housing Authority (OCHA)	Collaborative Applicant for Oklahoma City CoC. Helped develop the CCP. Will ensure youth voice is present at all meetings for the refinement of the youth homeless system.
Public Housing Authorities	Oklahoma City Housing Authority (OCHA)	OCHA was involved in the development of the CCP. They are the public housing authority for the City of Oklahoma City. They will provide vouchers for youth and young adults.
Local and State Educational Agencies	Oklahoma City Public Schools	Oklahoma City Public Schools is the largest school district in Oklahoma. Participated in the development of the CCP. Will continue to provide data and insight into youth experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

PARTNERSHIPS

YHDP Partner	Name	Involvement
Institutions of Higher Education	University of Central Oklahoma	Assisting with the development of a new CES assessment tool. Will work to ensure the tool includes youth voice in the development and that it is equitable and inclusive.
Non-Profit Youth Organizations	Pivot	Provides Emergency Shelter, Drop-In services and Transitional Living for youth and young adults experiencing homelessness. Will work to align agency policies and procedures with the CCP.
	Neighborhood Services Organization	Provides Transitional Living for males 18-24 years old who are experiencing homelessness. Will work to align agency policies and procedures with the CCP.
	Mental Health Associate Oklahoma (MHAO)	Provides Transitional Living for 18-24 years old who are experiencing homelessness and have a mental health diagnosis. Will work to align agency policies and procedures with the CCP. MHAO also provides street outreach, drop-in services and permanent supportive housing to the general homeless population.
	Oklahoma County Juvenile Bureau	The Juvenile Bureau is the juvenile justice agency for Oklahoma County. They assisted in the writing of the CCP, including providing data and information for the Statement of Need. They will continue to provide data for and insight into youth with juvenile justice involvement.
Local Advocacy, Research & Philanthropic Organizations	Inasmuch Foundation	Participated in the development of the CCP. Will ensure youth voice is present in meetings for the refinement of the youth homeless system. Will work to ensure funding opportunities align with the CCP. Participate on the Project Ranking and Review Committee.

KEY TERMS & ACRONYMS

Affordable Housing: Housing costing no more than 30% of a household's gross monthly income, according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Basic Center Programs: Provides temporary shelter, family reunification series, counseling, food, clothing, and aftercare services for unaccompanied homeless youth ages 14-17.

Centralized or Coordinated Entry System: A centralized or coordinated process designed to coordinate program participant intake, assessment, and provision of referrals. It must cover the geographic area, be easily accessed by individuals and families seeking housing or services, be well advertised, and include a comprehensive and standardized assessment tool.

Chronic Homeless: According to HUD, chronic homeless is when a person or family has a member who is: unaccompanied or within a family and has a disabling condition and has been continually homeless for at least one year or has been on the streets or in an emergency shelter four or more times in the last three years totaling 12 months. A family is considered chronic if an adult member meets the above definition.

Continuum of Care (CoC): A community wide commitment to ending homelessness; provides funding for efforts by non-profit providers, and State and local governments to quickly rehouse homeless individuals and families while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused to homeless individuals, families, and communities by homelessness; promote access to and effect utilization of mainstream programs by homeless individuals and families; and optimize self- sufficiency among individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

CoC Board: A group of people designated by the Continuum of Care that makes decisions on behalf of the Continuum. The Board must be representative of the subpopulations of homeless person that exist within the geographic area and include a homeless or formerly homeless person. The Board has three major duties: To operate the continuum of Care, to designate an HMIS for the Continuum of Care, and to plan for the continuum of Care.

Homeless Youth Alliance (HYA): A subcommittee of the Continuum of Care in Oklahoma City that helps in decisions made on behalf or for youth experiencing homelessness specifically. This group primarily consists of providers, community stakeholders and citizens with special interest in ending youth homelessness.

Department of Education Homeless Definition: The McKinney-Vento Act defines homeless children as "individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence." The Act then goes on to give examples of children who would fall under this definition: Children sharing housing due to economic hardship or loss of housing; Children living in "motels, hotels, trailer parks, or campgrounds due to lack of alternative accommodations" Children living in "emergency or transitional shelters" Children whose primary nighttime residence is not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation (e.g. park benches, etc.) Children living in "cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations.

Emergency Shelter: Any facility, the primary purpose of which is to provide temporary or transitional shelter for the homeless in general or for specific populations of the homeless.

Episodically Homeless: A person or family experiences recurrent problems with housing, often due to seasonal/minimum-wage income jobs or sporadic domestic situations that affect stable housing.

Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence: Individuals and families who are fleeing or are attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member.

Homeless Management Information System: Computerized data collection application designed to capture client-level information over time on the characteristics and service needs of those experiencing homelessness.

Homeless Resource Center: The agency identified as the primary administrator of coordinated intake and assessment. For the purpose of this document, that is the Philip D. Lewis Center and the partners administering the coordinated assessment process; Gulfstream Goodwill Industries, Adopt-A-Family and the Homeless Outreach Teams.

Homeless: Individuals or families who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; as well an individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations, an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

Housing First: A specific way of housing homeless persons that does not require prerequisite conditions before housing placement and prohibits eviction from housing for anything other than commonly accepted lease violations.

HUD: United States Department of Housing and Urban Development

Imminent Risk of Homelessness: Individuals and families who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence

Literally Homeless: Individuals and families who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence and includes a subset for an individual who resided in an emergency shelter or a place not meant for human habitation and who is exiting an institution where he or she temporarily resided.

Permanent Supportive Housing: Long-term (permanent) community-based housing and supportive services for homeless persons with disabilities. The intent of this type of housing is to enable this special needs population to live as independently as possible in a permanent setting.

Permanent housing with supportive services: To assist the client maintain housing and address other needs. Most commonly this means that clients who live in permanent supportive housing have a case manager providing client centered support.

Point in Time: A count of homeless persons at a particular point in time. HUD requires that a formal sheltered homeless count occur each year during the last week of January.

Prevention: An approach that focuses on preventing homelessness by providing assistance to households that would otherwise become homeless and end up in a shelter or on the streets.

Rapid Rehousing: An intervention designed to help people to quickly exit homelessness and return to permanent housing. Rapid re-housing assistance is offered without preconditions (such as employment, income, absence of criminal record, or sobriety) and the resources and services provided are tailored to the unique needs of the household. The core components of rapid re- housing are housing identification, financial assistance for rent or move-in costs and case management and services. Services and financial assistance in rapid re-housing are short term, typically six months or less.

Runaway and Homeless Youth Act: Provides support to address youth and young adult homelessness and is administered by the US Dept. of Health and Human Services. It funds three main interventions: street outreach, basic center and transitional living.

Transitional Housing: Transitional housing is a type of supportive housing used to facilitate the movement of homeless individuals and families to permanent housing. Homeless person can live in transitional housing for up to 24 months and receive supportive services that enable them to live more independently.

Transitional Living Program: Provides longer term housing with supportive services to homeless youth ages 16 to 21 for up to 18 months.

Unaccompanied Youth: Individuals under age 25 and families with children and youth who are defined as homeless under other federal statues who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition.

Youth Action Board (YAB): The Youth Action Board is made up solely of persons under 25 who have experienced homelessness. Youth Action Board seeks to engage homeless youth and collaborate with community partners and the OKC CoC to finalize OKC's YHDP . The purpose of the OKC YAB is to create youth centered solutions to prevent homelessness among youth or ensure their episodes of homelessness is as brief as possible.

Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP): The Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) is an initiative designed to prevent and end youth homelessness.

ENDNOTES

[1]Greater Oklahoma City Chamber – 2020 At A Glance

[2]2020 American Community Survey Data

[3]Greater Oklahoma City Chamber – 2020 At A Glance

[4]2020 American Community Survey Data

[5]FY 2022 HUD Fair Market Rent Documentation System

[6]Smith, S.G., et al. "The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey." National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for
 Disease Control and Prevention, 2018.

[7]Oklahoma Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board, 2018

[8]Bryen, Whitney. "Strangulation of Women Is Common, Chilling – and Often a Grim Harbinger." Oklahoma Watch, 12 Dec. 2019,
 Oklahomawatch.org/2019/05/29/539132/.

[9]National Vital Statistics Report: 2019 Births

[10]Gallup

[11]Voices of Youth Count. Missed Opportunities: LGBTQ Youth Homelessness in America

[12]Voices of Youth Count. Missed Opportunities: LGBTQ Youth Homelessness in America

The City of Oklahoma City/Oklahoma City Continuum of Care (OK-502) approve the Community Coordinated Plan

Name: Jerod Shadid – He/Him/His

Title: Program Planner – Homeless Services

Signature: _____

Name: Chris Varga

Title: Principal Planner – Community Development

Signature: _____

The Oklahoma City Youth Action Board approves the Community Coordinated Plan.

Name: Signature:

Dane Valentine

Dillyn Hanson

Garrison Grantham

David Gray

T.J. Jenkins

Sandrielle King

Cam'rin Hahn

Trace Chapline

Oklahoma Department of Human Services has approved this Community Coordinated Plan:

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Providers and Subrecipients approve the Community Coordinated Plan.

Name: Andru Dallaly M.Ed, LPC-C He/Him/His

Title: Project Manager - Homeless and Runaway Youth Services

Signature: _____

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Providers and Subrecipients approve the Community Coordinated Plan.

Name: Jennifer Goodrich, LPC, LADC

Title: President & CEO

Signature: _____

Name: Rachel Bradley, She/Her/Hers

Title: Executive Director

Signature: _____