



November is Homelessness Awareness Month! In this fall newsletter, we are featuring Part One of our spotlight on the Youth Action Board. Part Two in getting to know all the cool things happening with this group will be featured in the Winter Edition of the newsletter. Look throughout this newsletter for ways to get information, and get involved in awareness events, all through November!

# 1

## Getting to Know You:



## The Dane County Youth Action Board



### What is the Youth Action Board, and what do you do?

The Dane County Youth Action Board is a unique subcommittee of the HSC! It is a membership based board of young people with lived experience of homelessness or housing instability, who work together to end youth homelessness in Madison/Dane County!work to center equity and intersectionality throughout our systems. We advocate for the rights of young people, to ensure that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring in our community.”

#### The YAB is unique for a few reasons:

- We are entirely youth-led, self-governed, and run on a flat leadership model!
- We are not just a board, but a community of people who care deeply for each other, the work we do together, and the dedication for our communal vision! We are highly diverse in identities, beliefs, backgrounds, experiences, interests, and more, but all work together in our intersecting values!
- We are empowered by the CoC/HSC as the HSC’s Board responsible for program leadership and development through the YHDP by making decisions and facilitating program evaluation to make changes during demonstration period!
- The YAB also plugs into many, if not most, of the HSC’s workgroups and activities! We also partner closely with many organizations, teams, advocacy groups across the country!
- Many of us are also consultants, advocates and sit on boards and groups on local and national levels, as well!!



# 2

(Click on a link below for more information)

Homelessness Awareness Month is right around the corner...please note, two events the first week!

Our statewide event at the capitol on **Nov. 1st:**

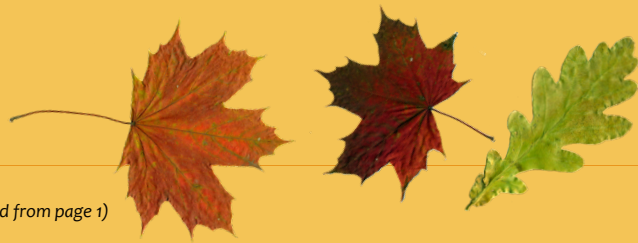
Wisconsin Homelessness Awareness

And our Dane County event on **Nov. 3rd** at the City-County Building:

Dane County Homelessness Awareness

# Uncovering Hidden Homelessness

~ raising awareness and promoting change ~



## Introducing **The Dane County Youth Action Board** (Continued from page 1)

“We work with our community to improve systems that affect youth. We provide insight, through our lived experience, on how to make a positive change within our communities! We value Diversity, Youth and Young Adult Leadership from those impacted by homelessness, Community connections & partnerships, Individual agency, and Transparency. We fight to eradicate systems of oppression including - but not limited to - adultism, racism, ableism, transphobia, homophobia, and classism. We work to center equity and intersectionality throughout our systems. We advocate for the rights of young people, to ensure that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring in our community.”

### What happens in a typical meeting?

The YAB’s meetings are youth-led and invite only spaces, which is necessary because older adults can often subconsciously affect or hinder authentic youth collaboration without even noticing. The YAB meets every Sunday, rain or shine, holidays and birthdays, and that stability is key to our team because our meetings are our office and our community. For the hours that we are together, we usually break the ice in a new way every time, or



share stories of what we are going through in our separate lives. Since the YAB operates in many different capacities throughout the community we divide our meetings and responsibilities up and each YAB member is the owner of a specific area, and plug in as task-owners across all the work (which ever interests them most.) We then work asynchronously throughout the week as our capacity allows (2-10hr) and come back together to update and move the areas forward as a team. Most of our meetings are highly focused on YHDP responsibilities, YAB sustainability, and community engagement. But every once in a blue moon, we prioritize a retreat where focus on self-care, team building, and affirming our work/life boundaries in order to protect our peace, because working as young adult leaders with lived experience in a historically oppressive, unfortunately-political, older-adult system can be tough. But when we’re facing it together, it’s not so bad.

### How does your work impact homelessness in our community?

The Dane County Youth Action Board has been thoroughly involved in YHDP from its start. From applying for the grant to - one day - evaluating the results of these programs, the YAB has provided leadership and evaluation from a place of lived-expertise and authentic youth collaboration to ensure these new youth programs are highly effective, trauma-informed, well supported, and accessible...because they’re the first and only of their kind!

Simply put, without YAB involvement these programs would not have come to our community, but beyond that, the YAB has dove fully into being involved in all aspects of program design - from gathering community feedback from other youth by hosting listening sessions, to writing the Coordinated Community Plan, to budgeting FMR and Utility Deposits, operations and into the budgets, to writing and selecting Requests for proposals and completing risk-analysis, to writing policy and youth service standards, to training community members and agencies- the YAB makes grand change by providing feedback from a place of lived experience and youth empowerment!



# Uncovering Hidden Homelessness

~ raising awareness and promoting change ~



Introducing **The Dane County Youth Action Board** *(Continued from pages 2 & 3)*

## What is important for service providers to know about supporting youth who are homeless?

Most of the times that systems are harmful to youth, they drive the youth away from engaging them, thus pushing them further from the support they deserve. The least known, and arguably most significant form of oppression present in youth services is adultism.

Adultism describes the systems of privileged attitudes and behaviors that adults have over those of younger people. Youth Service Provision is often hindered by adultism, because adultism is driven by behaviors and attitudes that are based on the assumption that adults are better or know more than young people and therefore entitles them to act on or on behalf of the young person without their consent or agreement. This happens when youth and young people are presumed to lack knowledge or experience because of their age and their ideas are dismissed. A lot of youth experiencing these services have been the responsible adult in their life long before they encountered you and attempting to reach them by acting like you are swooping in to save the day as their superior is not going to work, no matter how good your intentions are! Engaging youth authentically and effectively requires one to flip the idea of 'being young' on its head, and challenges the norms we all have been raised hearing.



### Examples of this adultism in common language:

“They’re just kids.” Referring to young people as “kids” can sometimes dismiss and undermine the knowledge and experience young people bring. The term “kids” inherently diminishes the experiences of a person rather than referring to someone as a young adult or a young person which sets a different tone.

“You’ll get it when you’re older.” Telling a young person that they will get it when they are older is a common response that dismisses the decisions and comprehend topics seems as mature, and ultimately shut moment when they would have otherwise been empowered by

Young people often know more than they let on, can articulate, or feel are so often shut down. When you step to the side, become a liberated youth by supporting them to make their own decisions, you will see determined they truly are. Beyond YHDP administrative funding, the own funding to support it’s other projects and activities. This limitation, creates challenges for participating in the necessary work throughout community, to keep us in mind, and keep our name and efforts lifted interested parties. Any and all support, through social media, resources, advice and advocacy, or sharing of information makes a and sustainability! We appreciate your time in getting to know us!

Facebook: [Dane County Youth Action Board | Madison WI](#)  
Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/yab\\_daneco](https://www.instagram.com/yab_daneco)  
Donations: [Dane County Youth Action Board - Flipcause](#)

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This newsletter is brought to you by the Doubled Up Committee....

Since 2019, we have been working to raise awareness about doubled up homelessness in our community and advocating for resources to support this population.

Questions or comments?  
Email us at [doubledupworkgroup@gmail.com](mailto:doubledupworkgroup@gmail.com)





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Homelessness Awareness Month is right around the corner...please join us at one or both of the kickoff events!

Our statewide event at the capitol on **Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>**:  
[Wisconsin Homelessness Awareness](#)

And our Dane County event on **Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup>**  
at the City-County Building:  
[Dane County Homelessness Awareness](#)

The ultimate purpose of Homelessness Awareness Month is not just to raise awareness, but also inspire action. Organize a simple event, small or large, in your community: your school, workplace, church, family or friends.

Ask friends and family to bring items to your holiday gathering and create a "Giving Basket" to donate to your school district's personal essentials closet for families in need. You can look on your district website to find your school's homeless liaison.

Here are a few other ideas:

- Donate to your local food pantry or clothing closet.
- Create "Loads of Love" laundry care packages (laundry basket, detergent, gift card to local laundromat, etc)
- Collect boots, snow pants, and waterproof gloves for area schoolkids
- Personal hygiene supply drive
- Gift card drive (gas, food, grocery, etc.) for families in need in your district

Other ideas for ways to get involved are here in the [Toolkit](#) – under "Community Call to Action."