



Committee to End Youth Homelessness Minutes

March 17, 2021, 10:00AM - 11:50AM

<https://zoom.us/j/97463541752>

Attending: Rodney Saunders Jr. Sarah Lim, Shannon Stevens, Allie Grant, Amy Steffes, Patrick Duffie, Torrie Kopp Mueller, Gloria Reyes, Tyler Schueffner, Catherine Reiersen, Melissa Mennig, Jani Koester

1. Introductions
2. Select note-taker: Sarah, breakout rooms will take their own notes
3. YHDP Update
 - a. HUD reports they will have an update on YHDP in a few weeks
4. Breakout Rooms focused on 2021 Priorities
 - a. Guiding questions: What are the available resources and/or service gaps? What steps could we take to close the gaps?

Priority #2: Raise awareness and provide advocacy around youth homelessness (Sarah, Jani, Tyler)

Focus on identifying different faces of youth experiencing homelessness, including:

- Age 12-17 (or grade 6-9, 10-12), 18-21, 22-24 (18-21 is Department of Health and Human Services)
- Attending school, not attending school
- Unaccompanied and accompanied
- Living situation

Homeless Definitions – HUD, Department of Education, Department of Health and Human Services (Runaway Homeless Youth)

For each dataset

- 2018-2019 data (pre pandemic)
- Dane County data
- Total number of youth by age or grade level
- Number of Unaccompanied youth
- Living situation breakdown
- Race

You can't do justice in this matter by just presenting data. Experiences of homelessness are important.

Priority #3: Identify vision of where we want to go as a community and strategies to get there (e.g. youth specific Coordinated Entry and Priority List) (Patrick, Rodney)

Gaps:

- Not many agencies serving youth besides Briarpatch-most housing providers do not have youth-specific services, also general homeless services have no options for parenting minors, and very few options for individual women, even less options for individual men
- Youth double up more than other populations – not meeting HUD definition of homelessness that make them eligible for HUD funded housing, results in not a lot of housing options for even HUD funded housing types
- Needs of parenting youth under 18 are not addressed

Steps to close gaps:

- Finding more housing options for young people, variety seems important
- PSH for youth
- Leasing or credit building resources
- Housing and employment training

Asked for suggestions of where to look for promising systems models

- Allie suggested Robin Sereno may have recommendations
- Tyler says Briarpatch is connected to RHY programs across the state/country and that would be a great connection to take advantage of (Tyler can reach out to Tim), also recommends we look at what they do in Milwaukee (Pathfinders)
- Gloria/Briarpatch has personal connection to Hannah from Nashville, who was involved in developing their successful YHDP application and also was hired for the temporary full-time coordinator of the YHDP community plan.

Priority #4: Reach out to and connect with BIPOC groups, new agencies, larger mainstream providers, housing developers to learn, ask for feedback, and develop a shared vision (after #2 and #3) (Torrie, Gloria)

HSC is unknown to some communities

- Hesitancy of HMIS, personal information sharing
- Lack of trust in HSC
- Bring together BIPOC organizations to present about homeless services and how they system works; ask questions - what is happening in your community? Opportunities to improve? Barriers? Gaps?
- We need to have understanding of systemic racism and be sure we are doing our own work to be able to support orgs and groups.
- Take same agenda to housing developers. What are barriers for them to develop affordable housing for youth?

Organizations to connect with:

- Urban League
- Centro
- Freedom Inc. do they work with youth?
- Urban Triage
- Sankofa Educational Leadership United
- Boys & Girls Club
- Connecting the Dots
- Sheray Wallace - Meadowwood
- Black Men Coalition of Dane County
- Jackie Hunt - FOSTER
- Peace Network, Inc. - Wanda Smith
- Sankofa Behavioral Health

Logistics

- Plan to host meeting in May??
- Figure out format of meeting, fit in with strategic planning for Briarpatch, hope to be able to get input for both HSC and Briarpatch in same time
- Feedback on how to serve all youth in our community, thinking about YHDP funds, identify barriers for BIPOC community for housing and homeless services, Focus on YOUTH!!!
- When speaking with housing developers, it would be helpful to share personal youth experiences, Torrie will ask Ethan about developers
- Agreed it would be most effective for Briarpatch to lead those meetings and prioritize cultural competency, noted that BIPOC orgs are tired of educating others, need to be clear about what the give and take is
- Allie stated she had met with staff from both Urban Triage and Freedom Inc earlier in 2021 as chair of CEYH, had given info on YHDP and asked for input when YHDP application came out. Question that came up both times was WHO will actually decide what agencies/projects get funded. As of right now, it seems like HSC Board and a Review Committee have total control over funding decisions. Review Committee is essentially voluntary, and group is not 100% clear on how members are decided (Torrie and Sarah had to leave meeting early!) but it IS clear that this is an opportunity for CEYH to provide advocacy for changes when it comes to HSC process

Priority #5: Create strong Youth Action Board that is involved with HSC (Shannon, Catherine, Allie, Arree)

- Lessons learned from previous YAB: biggest issue was inconsistency in the purpose, intent and work of the group. This go around we are trying to create more structure and focus on having a space to connect and talk about youth homelessness and share those experiences with HSC entities
- Noted that both YAB and non YAB HSC members struggle with understanding what is going on in HSC, example given was that process of HSC Board can be confusing, noted that when things are brought to a vote it often seems like things are decided beforehand (such as recommendations given for funding decisions from Review

Committee). Agreed that it would be challenging for YAB members to participate on Review Committee as it currently is, and there is a need for YAB to come up with ideas of how they could contribute to HSC, advocacy may be needed by CEYH to change how the Board does things.

- Arree compared HSC Board to the President, and HSC committees are like the state/local governments and is where a lot of the work seems to get done. The Lived Experience Committee currently has its members participate in all committees, but this would be too big of a commitment for YAB-need to think about options for YAB to interact with committees? Maybe committees could be scheduled to have joint meeting with YAB
- Executive committee - Catherine and Arree both say it would be helpful to have youth on that committee or interacting with that committee

Priority #6: Develop supply of housing for low income youth (Melissa, Amy)

- In the City of Madison, Section 42 properties get points with the City for targeting “specialized populations,” there is an opportunity for us to advocate that youth be added to the list of specialized populations, hopefully this would create an opportunity for affordable youth-targeted Section 42 units.
- Section 42 student restrictions - Common rule is you can’t live in a Section 42 unit if all household members are full-time students, but there are exceptions that many young people experiencing homelessness would qualify for, such as:
 - Being a single parent with a dependant (tax definition)
 - Receiving AFDC or TANF
 - Participating in a qualified JTPA program
 - Those who were at any point in the past under the care of a state foster agency (newer exception)
 - Married filing a joint tax return or eligible to file a joint tax return
- We should try and work with developers that already work with student populations, and advocate for them to crossover into general youth housing
- Talked about creating some sort of community fund or mechanism that would help fill the void of a co-signer (lack of co-signer is common barrier to housing for youth)
- Want to look into what exactly is needed for 17yo to sign lease in Dane County-don’t know yet but will find out
- Tyler suggested we start a document that lists common barriers to housing for youth
- We could potentially provide advocacy with landlords/developers for different screening requirements or recommendations for young people under 21

5. Walk-on items

- a. City-County Homeless Issues Committee wants CEYH to present on 4/1. Allie will attend, Gloria will attend for part of the time. They had specific questions about what rural homelessness and college homelessness look like for youth-we do not have the answer to these questions yet.
 - i. Rural homelessness – some data available at DPI website for non-MMSD, but it doesn’t have breakdown of unaccompanied youth. Jani can find out from the

HEN group. This year's data is not going to be accurate with COVID restriction. We would want to ask for a few years going back, at least 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 school year for middle school and high school students experiencing homelessness. Jani says only issue is that data is often not separated so you can't tell how many unaccompanied homeless youth there were vs. youth who are homeless with their families. Goal would be to find out how many unaccompanied homeless youth all school districts in the County are identifying and be able to track that data over time.

- ii. Shannon and Tyler have reached out to UW and MATC - neither appear to track the number of students experiencing homelessness officially.
 - b. Future meeting topic: presentation on how HSC makes funding decisions-then how can the process be accessible to YAB/what advocacy does CEYH have to do to make that happen?
6. Next meeting: April 21, 2021, 10:00AM-11:50AM

If you need meeting materials in another format, please contact Gloria Reyes (gloria.reyes@briarpatch.org) or Allie Grant (agrant@trhome.org).