

SUBURBAN COOK COUNTY, IL

COMMUNITY PLAN TO END YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

ALLIANCE TO END HOMELESSNESS IN SUBURBAN COOK COUNTY (IL-511)

SUBMITTED: MARCH 31, 2020

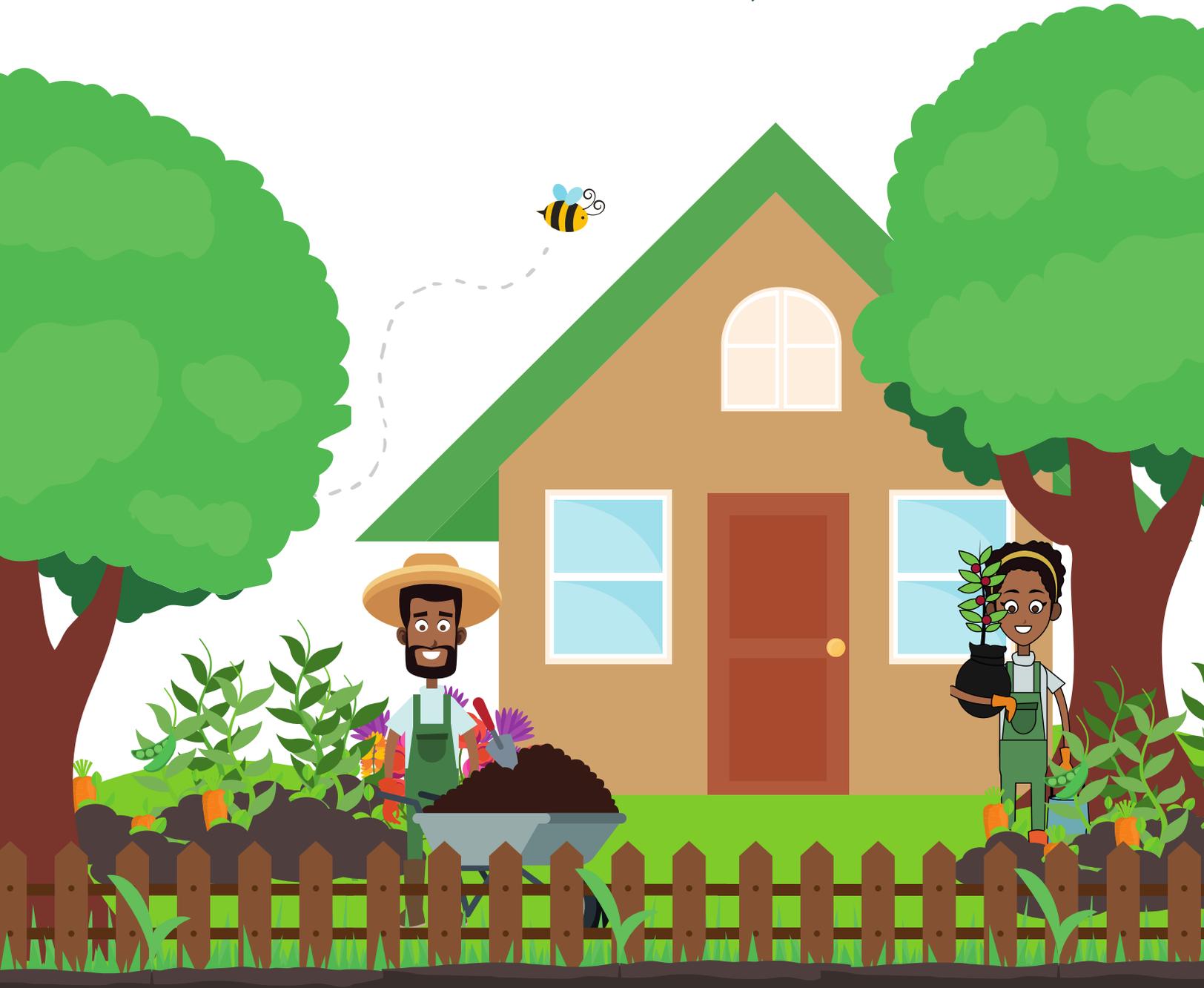


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We give a heartfelt thanks to all stakeholders that have contributed their time, energy, and support to creating our Coordinated Community Plan (CCP).¹ We would like to thank:

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YAB Members at the 100 Day Challenge Sustainability Workshop in Skokie, IL
From left to right: Angelo Hatter, Erick Mosby, Emani Williams, Béjor Weathersby Grove, Michael McAndrews, and Antonio Morrison

¹ The Appendix contains the Stakeholder Chart, which outlines critical partners and their roles in the YHDP Planning Process. The HUD-required partners are included (CoC Board, Youth Action Board, Child Welfare and Local Government) along with many more cross-sector collaborators.

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- American Job Centers
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- Cook County State's Attorneys Office
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- Youth & Opportunity United
- Youth Action Board - North
- Youth Action Board - South
- Youth Crossroads
- Youth Job Center
- Youth Outreach Services
- YWCA Metropolitan Chicago





Taking food from 7/11 to make sure my brother was eating it
Lord forgive me for my sins daily I just kept repeating it
I had to keep my head out of the gutta to make sure my eyes was seeing it
Can't tell you how to live your life just know when you pray to make sure
you believe in it

It's a few things in my past that still haunt me til this day

I gotta make me a way

I gotta change my ways

Or maybe that's just my trait

Jumping from house to house and car to car ain't the way to stay

Pick yo head up It's gone be lght it's gone be ok

I'm out here keeping things in check when this a chess play

They wanted me to tell my story lg we got all day

I had to cut off a few of my homies they turned out to be fake

They ain't have no faith

They ain't never gave me a plate

My pockets was breathing dust no money but they threw bread in face

I had a few options but I know I didn't want that case.

Just a black man tryna escapes

Hope man I can taste

I was homeless for 3 years I can say I'm safe

Definitions

The Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County (IL-511) strives to prevent and end homelessness for all unaccompanied youth and young adults under the age of 25.

For the purposes of our Coordinated Community Plan (CCP), we are working to end homelessness for youth who meet all categories of homelessness as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) below:

I. Literally Homeless - Youth who are in shelter, transitional housing, hotels or motels paid for by the government or charity (sheltered), or sleeping on the streets, in parks, or other places not meant for human habitation (unsheltered).

II. Imminently at risk of homelessness - Youth who will lose housing (including doubled up situations) within the next 14 days with no other safe place to stay and no money or other resources for housing. Youth who have been couch surfing with multiple moves in the last two months and can be expected to have continued housing instability.

III. Homeless under other federal statutes - Youth who are classified as homeless under other federal statutes, including the McKinney-Vento Homelessness Assistance Act and the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA). Youth who meet these definitions lack safe regular and adequate housing. Examples include the home of an acquaintance/ friend/girlfriend/boyfriend, a foster or group home, a hospital/ emergency room, a residential treatment facility, a corrections detention center, or at the home of someone the youth was having sex with as a means of survival.

IV. Fleeing dangerous or life-threatening situations - Youth fleeing or attempting to flee their housing or the place they are staying because of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions related to violence that has taken place in the house or has made them afraid to return to the house, including: Trading sex for housing, trafficking, physical abuse, violence (or perceived threat of violence) because of the youth's sexual orientation. Additionally, the youth must have no safe, alternative housing, resources or support networks to maintain or obtain permanent housing².

The target population for this plan is:

Youth: Minors under age 18 who are not accompanied by a parent or guardian (unaccompanied minor)

Young Adults: Young adults ages 18-24 who are not accompanied by a parent or guardian

Throughout this document, the term **Youth and Young Adults (YYA)** refers to both target populations.

² <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Determining-Homeless-Status-of-Youth.pdf>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County was awarded a two-year Youth Homeless Demonstration Program (YHDP) grant in the amount of \$6,078,027 to create and implement a plan to end homelessness for unaccompanied youth under 25 years old, including launching new projects to help us reach this goal. Since the beginning planning stages of the YHDP, partners in suburban Cook County, IL, have been deeply embedded in learning more about the experiences of youth homelessness in our community and developing approaches and solutions that better meet the diverse and complex needs of youth and young adults (YYA) and expand the availability of services in an equitable way.

Our vision is to end youth homelessness in suburban Cook County by the end of 2024. Driven by youth leadership and cross-sector collaboration, youth homelessness in our community will be brief, rare, and one-time. All young people experiencing homelessness will have immediate and equitable access to everything they need to thrive in their housing, education, employment, well-being, and positive connections.



Over the course of a year

496

18-24 year old households served in the homeless services system

347

unaccompanied homeless youth identified in schools

87

minors served in RHY programs

On any given night

80 youth and young adult households are experiencing homelessness in suburban Cook County



56

18 to 24 year olds



24

parenting youth



36

children of parenting youth



PREGNANT AND PARENTING

57

parenting youth and their

87

children were served in one year

24

parenting youth are in shelter on any given night



CHILD WELFARE-INVOLVED

10%

of 18-24 year old homeless youth self-reported involvement with the child welfare system

60%

of these youth reported aging out of foster care



MINORS

87

homeless minors served over the course of one year

347

unaccompanied homeless students in one school year



JUSTICE SYSTEM-INVOLVED

39%

of homeless youth have been involved in the justice system



LGBTQ+

10%

of homeless youth and young adults self-identified as transgender

10%

of homeless youth and young adults self-identified as lesbian, bisexual, gay, or other sexual orientation



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

10%

of young adults experiencing homelessness were fleeing domestic violence at the time of intake

Illinois is ranked **11th** in the nation for number of cases of human trafficking

New YHDP-funded projects

The Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County was awarded a two-year Youth Homeless Demonstration Program grant in the amount of \$6,078,027. To better meet the needs of youth and young adults experiencing homelessness, proposed YHDP projects embody the core principles and contain new innovations in our community.

The YHDP funded projects include:

- Planning Grant: Support to create and implement a plan to prevent and end youth homelessness and involvement of youth with lived experience in planning, project design, and implementation.
- Project 1: Enhanced Data System
 - Expand HMIS database capacity to incorporate the new YHDP programs, track and report outcomes, and meet Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) goals.
- Project 2: Enhanced Coordinated Entry and System Navigation
 - Youth Coordinated Entry System Manager (Project 2a): expand and develop a youth-coordinated entry system, including managing system navigators and cross-system coordination.
 - Youth Coordinated Entry Training and Engagement Manager (Project 2a): Provide training, coaching, and support to ensure YHDP projects adhere to best practices and YHDP principles, lead youth-specific CE marketing, and lead system-focused youth leadership development and engagement.
 - System Navigators (Project 2b): Frontline staff working across the entire suburban region to identify young adults ages 14-24 who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness through community outreach and referrals from the education, justice, and welfare system. Using a pool of flexible resources, navigators will work to divert youth from homelessness if possible, and if not—connect young adults to crisis and permanent housing options and other non-housing resources and benefits.
- Project 3: Joint Component Transitional Housing-Rapid Re-Housing (TH-RRH)
 - Young Adults seeking shelter can immediately access crisis housing (TH) until a move to permanent housing (RRH). Youth can also bypass TH to move into another permanent destination.

Shared Vision

Our vision is to end youth homelessness in suburban Cook County by the end of 2024. Driven by youth leadership and cross-sector collaboration, youth homelessness in our community will be brief, rare, and one-time. All young people experiencing homelessness have immediate and equitable access to everything they need to thrive in their housing, education, employment, well-being, and positive connections.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal 1: Youth-Centered and YHDP Principles

YHDP principles and authentic youth engagement will be at the center of new projects and system change efforts.



Objectives

- 1a. Youth voice and experience is at the center of assessing, planning and implementing all strategies and programming.
- 1b. YHDP principles of equity, positive youth development, trauma-informed practices, housing first, family engagement, youth choice, individual and client-driven supports, and social and community integration are implemented on the project and system level.

Goal 2: Identification and Access

Identify all youth and young adults experiencing and at risk of homelessness as quickly as possible and connect them to resources.



Objectives

- 2a. All youth who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness know where to go and how to access services and supports.
- 2b. All youth who are homeless are tracked on an “active list” across systems.

Goal 3: Prevention and Diversion

When youth and young adults present or are identified as experiencing or at risk of homelessness, service providers prevent homelessness and divert or rapidly exit them to safe and stable housing whenever possible.



Objectives

- 3a. Develop a process, protocol, staffing, and flexible resources to divert or rapidly exit youth entering the homeless system.
- 3b. Implement new strategies to ensure youth exiting and involved with the foster care system do not become homeless.
- 3c. Implement new strategies to ensure youth exiting and involved with the juvenile justice system do not become homeless.

Goal 4: Immediate Access to Low-Barrier Crisis Housing

If prevention and diversion are not possible, provide immediate access to low-barrier crisis or short-term housing and services to all youth and young adults who need and want them.



Objectives

- 4a. Expand crisis housing options for youth and young adults under 18 AND under 25.
- 4b. Develop a process and protocol to ensure that all adult shelters and non-CoC youth TH beds are fully utilized and equipped to serve youth.
- 4c. Develop alternative methods for youth to identify and access shelter and crisis housing through the Coordinated Entry system.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal 5: Access to longer-term housing and services

Providers link all youth experiencing homelessness to longer term housing and services that help achieve the USICH core outcomes of stable housing, permanent connections, education and employment, and improved well-being.



Objectives

- 5a. Create new permanent housing projects.
- 5b. Develop and implement a comprehensive landlord engagement strategy.
- 5c. Providers across systems will develop new models to increase and track positive and lasting connections between YYA and trusted adults, peers, community, and other social supports

- .5d. Develop a comprehensive strategy to connect YYA to meaningful and sustainable employment and training opportunities
- 5e. Innovate new models to support YYA that enroll in higher education and increase the number of youth who enroll
- 5f. Develop a plan to improve connections that improve YYA overall well-being, including health, mental health, and substance use treatment.
- 5g. Develop a plan to guarantee transportation (to shelter/service providers, work, school, appointments, and other places that support social connections)
- 5h. All service providers across systems are trained and equipped to meet the needs of pregnant and parenting YYA
- 5i. All service providers equipped to identify and serve survivors of human trafficking, sexual exploitation, and domestic violence).

Goal 6: Advocacy and Resource Development

Advocate for the funding and policy changes needed to more effectively prevent and end youth homelessness.



Objectives

- 6a. Identify and advocate for legislative changes at the local and state level that will contribute to ending youth homelessness
- 6b. Develop a fundraising plan to support the implementation of the Coordinated Community Plan.

Goal 7: Continuous Quality Improvement

We will continually evaluate the effectiveness of community efforts to prevent and end youth homelessness.



Objectives

- 7a. Ensure that strategic planning and implementation are data-driven, regularly evaluate implementation to ensure that the system is responsive to youth needs, accountable to strategic efforts, and effective in supporting achievement of intended outcomes.
- 7b. Develop a comprehensive youth homelessness system that ensures equity in access, experiences while seeking and receiving services, and outcomes for all YYA across the CoC's geographic region.

Guiding Principles

Equity

Positive Youth Development

Trauma-Informed Approaches

Housing First

Family Engagement

Youth Choice

Individualized and Client-Driven Supports

Social and Community Integration

Guiding Principles and Frameworks

USICH Youth Framework and Four Core Outcomes

The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) released the Framework to End Youth Homelessness in 2013. Utilizing a data strategy to better understand prevalence, characteristics and needs of homeless youth and a capacity strategy to support improved service delivery, the framework outlines a path towards ending youth homelessness leveraging federal, state and local partners and resources.

The Framework recognized four Core Outcomes for youth and youth adults. The four core outcomes that are present in all aspects of this Coordinated Community Plan include:

1. **Stable housing:** A safe and reliable place to call home;
2. **Permanent connections:** Ongoing attachments to families, communities, schools, and other positive social networks;
3. **Education/employment:** High performance in and completion of educational and training activities, especially for younger youth, and starting and maintaining adequate and stable employment, particularly for older youth; and
4. **Social-emotional well-being:** The development of key competencies, attitudes, and behaviors that equip a young person to succeed across multiple domains of daily life, including school, work, relationships, and community.

Guiding Principles

In addition to the USICH Four Core Outcomes, the work to prevent and end youth homelessness in suburban Cook County is guided by the following principles

1. Equity
2. Positive Youth Development
3. Trauma-Informed Approaches
4. Housing First
5. Family Engagement
6. Youth Choice
7. Individualized and Client-Driven Supports
8. Social and Community Integration

These principles align with the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) Federal Framework to End Youth Homelessness³ and reflect the priorities and values of our community.

Our Youth Action Boards defined additional values that are foundational to the work of ending youth homelessness, both in the community process and within the programs and services.

Each principle is defined, and clear action steps are included that demonstrate how each principle is implemented in our work. Actions linked to the YAB Values are woven throughout the principles.

³ <https://www.usich.gov/tools-for-action/framework-for-ending-youth-homelessness/>

Youth Action Board Values

Non-judgment Interactions with YYA do not label or judge them based on background, experiences, choices, or behaviors.

Interpersonal transparency and vulnerability Sharing happens honestly and authentically to help build trust and connections.

System- and project-level transparency Programs have clear rules and expectations, and staff are approachable and straightforward with YYA.

Creativity and innovation is cultivated within programs.

Open-mindedness Different points of view and experiences are valued.

Creating Space for Communication and other mediums to process information and experiences, and to clarify beliefs

Diversity Welcoming and respecting people of all cultures with open and loving arms.

Sharing and Storytelling Recognize the healing nature of sharing your story and the power it has to build relationships. Stories should be shared without censorship and without re-traumatizing. All stories are unique.

Accountability and Reflection How we are maintaining integrity within our relationships and are holding ourselves accountable to the behaviors we say we are going to do.

Community The relationships we have with each other and the people we serve is the key component holding the work together.

Listening to needs and boundaries so that we can further develop relationships in this work.



Equity

Definition In the context of YHDP, community leaders agree that equity includes ensuring meaningful access to power for those most impacted by homelessness. This includes identifying who does and does not have power to make decisions and shifting that power balance to ensure equitable access and outcomes.

Additionally, equity looks at access and outcomes for YYA and their experiences within the system, with a critical eye on geographic differences and specific identities that may be disproportionately impacted such as youth of color, pregnant and parenting youth, and LGBTQ+ youth.

Implementation of Equity

- Prioritize geographic equity in the Action Plan and project selection to ensure equitable access to resources and services throughout the region
- Develop accountability structures to ensure youth leadership and guidance in program and system operation, development, and evaluation.
- Ensure that decision-makers with power represent the communities being served and include YYA
- Create paid opportunities for YYA within YHDP such as interviews, paid roles/staff positions, etc.
- Create multiple ways for people’s voices to be heard and included—not just in-person meetings
- Evaluate equity in access to housing, services, and supports through the CQI process.
- Review outcomes for subpopulations and create measurable goals for addressing any inequities
- Provide Equity training which includes a historical context and systemic and institutionalized racism for staff at all levels of each organization participating in YHDP
- Develop or use existing tools to identify strengths and gaps in equity across the system

“Decision making often engages in gatekeeping and marginalized people are not given real power to make and inform decisions. Equity is not [just] about representation but is about meaningful access to power.”
- YHDP Leader

Positive Youth Development

Definition Positive Youth Development (PYD) is based on the belief that, given guidance and support from caring adults, all youth can grow up healthy and happy, making positive contributions to their families, schools, and communities. PYD does not address youth primarily as problems to be solved, but rather assets to be developed.

In a youth-serving program, staff should understand the developmental processes and challenges youth encounter without using those understandings as justification for adultist practices and processes. This includes cognitive, social, emotional, physical development and the impact that traumatic experiences can have on these domains.

Implementation of Positive Youth Development

As a community we commit to operationalize PYD in the development and delivery of services in the following ways:

- Welcome youth of all identities, including gender, sexual orientation, and cultural identity through messaging, environment, and services.
- Ensure that providers and access points across the system know how to interact with youth and young adults in a non-judgmental way, without labeling or judging them based on their background, experiences, choices, or behaviors.
- Provide opportunity and holistic support to youth served in our programs to achieve USICH core outcomes of stable housing, permanent connections, education/employment, and improved well-being.
- Provide intentional supports for youth to develop authentic and ongoing positive connections and relationships with family, friends, and community supports.
- Offer on-going supports to youth (if needed) after exiting the YHDP project to ensure ongoing success.
- Provide training and ongoing coaching for all youth-serving program staff and hold staff accountable to PYD principles in their interactions with YYA. Training may include PYD principles, non-violent communication, restorative practices and transformative justice.
- Intentionally identify and combat adultism in our programs and systems. Develop accountability structures to ensure youth leadership and guidance in program and system operation, development, and evaluation.

“[The staff members] actually cared, they actually had the heart and are invested in the youth... [They] care about personal development.”

- Youth Stakeholder M reflecting on staff at a local organization who embodied the principles of PYD and were helpful to him while experiencing homelessness.

Community Commitments to Authentic Youth Engagement

Hand-in-hand with PYD is Authentic Youth Engagement. During the YHDP community planning process our community made eight commitments to Authentic Youth Engagement.

1. We commit to being non-judgmental in our work with young people.
2. We commit to receiving youth feedback on all rules and regulations in our agencies and decisions made throughout the YHDP process.
3. We commit to undergoing and promoting self-assessment of existing programs and services, to identify and undo adultism.
4. We commit to creating opportunities for young people to inform and design programs, projects, and services.
5. We commit to continued professional development/education in positive youth development and youth collaboration.
6. We commit to becoming anti-adultism advocates.
7. We commit to encouraging local agencies/organizations to develop their own youth input mechanisms and leadership bodies (e.g. youth action boards).
8. We commit to creating more possibilities for youth to meet their needs, not just prescriptions.



Trauma-Informed Approaches

Definition Trauma-informed care (TIC) is an approach that recognizes the prevalence and role trauma plays in people's lives and uses this knowledge to respond in appropriate ways. Trauma-informed approaches re-frame services from interpreting behaviors and need as "what is wrong with you?" to curiosity about "what happened to you?" This shift allows for policies and practices that create a more responsive environment for those who have experienced trauma. Homelessness is one form of trauma.

Trauma-informed approaches help us understand what someone's trauma might make them think or feel, or how it might make them behave. Explaining the physiological impacts of trauma can help people to understand their own experiences. These approaches increase sensitivity to the fact that most clients are experiencing trauma and the aftereffects so that the staff member can tailor their interactions to best support the individual. Trauma-informed approaches help to avoid retraumatizing youth by allowing them to tell their stories in their own way and time, and avoid activities, settings, and situations that would bring up painful memories or induce stress.

Many staff members have experienced trauma in their own lives, or secondary trauma (the trauma of others) through their work. This creates a need for support and trauma-informed approaches on the staff level as well to help avoid burnout and maintain staff health and consistency in relationships between YYA and staff members.

Implementation of Trauma-Informed Approaches

As a community we commit to operationalize trauma-informed approaches in the development and delivery of services in the following ways:

- Guided by youth leaders, develop a shared understanding at the program and system level of the trauma and barriers faced by individuals and specific communities without presuming to be an expert on those experiences of trauma.
- Assess how approachable and transparent the homeless system and individual youth-serving providers and programs are. Ensure rules and expectations are clearly communicated to and understood by participants and ensure that expectations set for and promises made to youth and young adults are delivered consistently.
- Use trauma-informed agency self-assessment tools to help the CoC and agencies review their policies, rules and the design of their spaces to better align them with trauma-informed principles.
- Create and implement a training plan and CQI process to ensure all providers are trained and effectively implementing TIC.

Housing First

Definition A right to housing without preconditions is the most fundamental definition of Housing First, grounded in a rights-based philosophy that all people deserve housing. This means that for a young adult to access housing, there should be no sobriety requirements, no mandated services and no requirements around employment, education or income. Some providers may have reservations about Housing First practice for youth because they assume that youth are less capable of living independently. That is an example of how adultism can show up in our thinking.

The spirit of Housing First is also extended to low-threshold emergency shelter options and resources—ensuring that all youth and young adults can have their basic needs met without preconditions. We will not turn anyone away and we will stick with them until they have reached a good outcome.

According to the US Interagency Council on Homelessness, “Housing First is a proven approach, applicable across all elements of systems for ending homelessness, in which people experiencing homelessness are connected to permanent housing swiftly and with few to no treatment preconditions, behavioral contingencies, or other barriers. It is based on overwhelming evidence that people experiencing homelessness can achieve stability in permanent housing if provided with the appropriate level of services.” Additionally, Housing First is based on the theory that client choice is valuable in housing selection and supportive service participation, and that exercising that choice is likely to make a client more successful in remaining housed and improving their life.





Suburban Cook 100 Day Challenge team members presenting a skit that depicts the barriers to housing that youth and young adults face.

Implementation of Housing First

As a community we commit to operationalize Housing First in the development and delivery of services in the following ways:

- Write all new and existing housing and shelter policies with Housing First principles as the foundation (e.g., all youth access programs quickly and without preconditions and stay in programs until they achieve a good outcome).
- Ensure that all new and existing providers can implement housing first effectively by providing training, coaching and CQI accountability.
- Work with youth individually to avoid common causes of housing loss. For example, create a proactive plan about how youth build community and manage visitors to their units.
- Provide support for landlords who house YYA to ensure they trust service providers to be responsive to any concerns or crises that arise, thus adding a layer of security to clients' housing situations.
- Provide tenant and landlord education about their rights and responsibilities, including laws and requirements within the Fair Housing Act.
- Provide additional skill-building activities to support youth success in maintaining housing (e.g., credit and credit history)
- Ensure that project termination policies and processes use a Housing First approach. For example, a client should not be terminated from programs for facing an eviction. If a participant must be re-housed or terminated from a program, ensure that the system has policies and processes in place to ensure their needs are met.

Family Engagement

Definition Family engagement is a family-centered, strength-based approach to strengthening, restoring and maintaining relationships between youth and their families. A critical element is working with the young person to identify who they consider family. This may include biological family, chosen family (including other young adults) and other positive connections. Family Engagement celebrates the youth's role as a leader in their chosen family—affirming the role and responsibilities that the young person plays as a mentor or older family member to other youth.

To be successful, family engagement must recognize the trauma and challenges that may have occurred within families and provide opportunities for mediation, restorative justice and non-violent communication.

Stronger family relationships may increase the level of supports and resources available to that young person. This may include a safe living situation (temporary or permanent), a place for holiday meals, a listening ear, lessons on life skills, social opportunities and more.



Implementation of Family Engagement

As a community we commit to operationalize Family Engagement in the development and delivery of services in the following ways:

- Provide training and coaching to staff and youth on diversion/rapid exit, conflict resolution, and mediation to strengthen relationships and help ensure that family reunification (however youth defines family) is considered as an option when safe and appropriate.
- Explore best practices and expand our understanding of how and why youth experience homelessness and use this information to develop targeted family engagement and strengthening activities.
- Ensure that the young person is in control of the family engagement process—determining the circumstances in which family members are engaged and receiving the necessary support to promote healthy and healing interactions as relationships are strengthened.
- Pursue all available system information that can support positive connections. For example, with client consent, streamlining data sharing between CoC and DCFS staff to reconnect with youth-identified supports such as former foster parents.
- Select a tool (e.g., Youth Connections Scale) to help direct-service staff identify and connect YYA to family members or other positive connections and measure progress on establishing positive connections in the CQI process.
- Partner with DCFS, family counseling programs, and other community resources to ensure that youth and their family members can access the support needed to strengthen relationships and allow for reunification when appropriate. These supports may include trainings on mediation, non-violent communication, restorative justice and circle keeping.

Youth Choice

“Youth believe adultism has played a huge role in how youth voice is considered in decision-making structures. The devaluing of youth opinion has destroyed trust between adults and youth and has destroyed the trust and belief that youth have in themselves. This lack of self-confidence creates a subconscious hesitation for youth when it comes to making decisions that affect more than themselves and their immediate surroundings.”

- YAB Leader

Definition Youth choice means that youth and young adults are able to make their own decisions about their lives and the services they need. At the individual level, this includes decisions about shelter and housing options, services, child welfare case planning, family engagement and more.

At the system level, this requires active YAB leadership designing and evaluating the services needed to prevent and end youth homelessness. It also means that there are choices and service options that meet the individualized needs of youth. In addition, it means that providers are prepared to respond to feedback from youth to change and improve programs to better respond to youth-identified needs.

Community Stakeholders identified a need for “much deeper and more integrated youth involvement in planning and guidance” which aligns with Youth Choice at the system level. Our community must understand the impact that adultism has played in our systems.

Implementation of Youth Choice

As a community we commit to operationalize Youth Choice in the development and delivery of services in the following ways:

- Ensure that all programs are voluntary and utilize progressive engagement techniques.
- Implement programs so that youth at the program and system level can exercise choice regarding their goals and priorities; location and type of housing; nature and extent of services and programs they access including those relating to wellness, family engagement, and social and community integration; and development of education, employment, and/or entrepreneurial goals.
- Presume that youth and young adult clients are capable of making the decisions that are best for them and are experts in their own experiences. Interact non-judgmentally, regardless of their choices or behaviors.
- Provide multiple opportunities for feedback from youth on services, system design, and future programming and training needs. (e.g. youth serve as Board members, client surveys, focus groups)
- Support youth involvement in the YABs (e.g. providers serve as host site, provide transportation, help with logistics, Alliance provides stipends)
- Identify YYA engaging in a service designed for adults through the coordinated entry process and give them the immediate option of staying there or transitioning to a youth-specialty organization as their primary service organization.
- Ensure that youth can select their case manager and are able to switch at any time.
- Provide capacity building for staff including training and coaching on motivational interviewing, client-centered care, eradicating adultism (adultism is a barrier to respecting Youth Choice).
- Establish a strong set of partnerships to ensure that every choice that is made by a young person can be supported with viable resources and connections externally, if not already available internally within the agency/program.

“Adults must allow their methods and policies to be questioned, challenged, and evaluated by youth. Youth recognize the worthiness of their contribution and acknowledge there are considerable external factors that act as barriers for them to participate in community decision-making.”

- YAB Leader

Definition This approach recognizes that each individual young person is unique—and so are their needs and strengths. The range of services available in our community allows youth to select the supports that best align with their goals and needs. These services must be voluntary, individualized, culturally appropriate, and accessible. They address an array of needs to support housing stability, mental and physical health needs, education, employment, and life skills.

Implementation of Individualized and Client Driven Supports

As a community we commit to operationalize Client-Driven Supports in the development and delivery of services in the following ways:

- Ensure that youth drive their goal setting and service needs.
- Guarantee through a Progressive Engagement model that young people can access the level of supports they need, which may change over time.
- Operate services in locations and during times that are convenient to youth.
- Use a “no wrong door, no wrong time” approach so that youth can enter and re-enter services as needed.
- Ensure that individual youth needs are identified and addressed through coordinated entry policies, procedures, and tools.
- Encourage providers to intentionally hire staff who share an identity or background (e.g. housing instability, LGBTQ+ identity, etc.) of the youth served. Hiring peers is critical to a strong program and requires additional supports for these staff to be successful and avoid tokenization.
- Identify a tool or set of practices to help youth identify their own strengths. Possibly utilize a peer approach and learn through storytelling and listening to others—identifying strengths in others often leads to discovering one’s own strengths.
- Create and implement a training plan and CQI process to ensure all providers are trained and effectively implementing Client-Driven Supports.

Closely linked with Youth Choice—youth have the defining say in what programs and resources they utilize.

Individualized and Client Driven Supports

Definition Youth and young adults will be most successful when integrated in a community of positive and lasting supports. Housing alone won't end homelessness. Social and emotional well-being is another critical element of success. Offering YYA meaningful ways to be involved in the community through school, employment, civic engagement and general social interaction increases social and community integration.



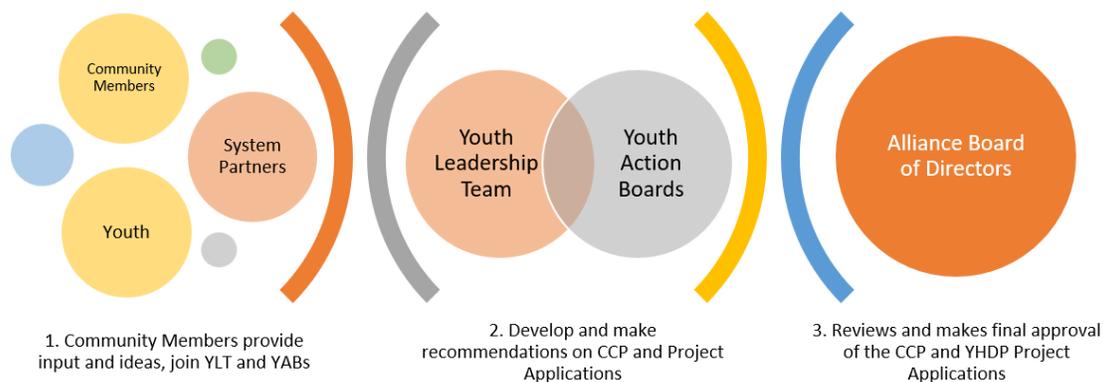
Implementation of Social and Community Integration

As a community we commit to operationalize Social and Community Integration in the development and delivery of services in the following ways:

- Ensure that program structure and culture support youth having social lives and are fully integrated into their communities. Some examples could include:
 - Programs allow technology and have space for visitors.
 - Youth are allowed overnights.
 - Community involvement is supported. e.g. providing opportunities for museum visits, concerts, sporting events.
- Incorporate youth's social and community goals in individualized service plans
- Identify which meaningful experiences exist in the community that are not built on adultism, trauma, negative experiences with youth etc. and share those opportunities with YYA to increase support and networking.
- Provide training and coaching for youth as they navigate community spaces that are not affirming of their identities and experiences.
- Advocate for policy and system change efforts to address inequality and system level barriers to access and opportunity. For example, pursuing state legislation to create homeless liaison positions within institutions of Higher Education.

YHDP Governance Structure

The community's overall YHDP decision-making process involves a broad group of community stakeholders (including youth and young adults with lived experience), the Youth Leadership Team, the north and south Youth Action Boards and the Alliance Board of Directors. The structure for YHDP governance, approval of the CCP and project applications, and ongoing oversight during implementation is as follows:



Community Stakeholders representing a broad range of sectors and systems contribute to planning efforts in multiple ways such as Community Forums, Focus Groups and Stakeholder Surveys and Interviews. They can participate in the Youth Action Boards or the Youth Leadership Team.

The **Youth Leadership Team (YLT)** is comprised of diverse stakeholders representing child welfare, Youth Action Board members, CoC providers, local government, juvenile justice system, education providers, and more⁴. The YLT operates with a consensus-based approach for decision-making. Open discussion is facilitated to surface any concerns or questions among the members. The YLT operates on an 80% comfort model of consensus—we strive for each individual member to feel at least 80% comfortable and supportive of the recommendations. And, the group overall must feel at least 80% comfortable in approving the final plan and all projects. This allows members to hold a variety of opinions, but ultimately move the initiative forward even if they do not agree on every detail—as long as their concerns were voiced and addressed appropriately. If one of the HUD required Key Partners (YAB, Child Welfare, CoC, Local Government) does not approve the plan or recommendations, refinement is continued until agreement is reached. Votes are held during YLT meetings and members may vote in favor, oppose or abstain. If a member will be absent during a YLT meeting where a vote will be

⁴ See roster of all YLT members in Acknowledgments section.

held, they can communicate with an Alliance staff member in advance to share their thoughts or position. The YLT has an open membership policy and new members may join at any time.

There are two regional **Youth Action Boards** (YAB) in the northern and southern regions of suburban Cook County. The YABs are composed of youth and young adults age 24 and younger who are currently or formerly experiencing homelessness. On average, 13 YYA participate in monthly YAB meetings. YAB members attend the YLT meetings to guide and advise on the YHDP process and share updates on YAB activities. YAB co-chairs report on YLT activities to the YABs and encourage member participation in YLT meetings. YAB co-chairs are invited to attend Alliance Board meetings so that they can provide input on all CoC decisions—including final approval of the CCP and Project Applications.

Alliance staff and YAB co-chairs present content of the plan and proposed projects in a user-friendly way to YAB members and provide individual support as needed to ensure YAB members have the opportunity to understand and discuss fully. Each YAB establishes their own governance structure. At the YAB – North, decisions are reached through $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of members present at the meeting. All absent members are notified via text or email about the vote and are given an opportunity to share thoughts or position. At the YAB – South, the elected co-chairs will make final decisions on approving YHDP-related materials. YAB membership is open to young adults who are experiencing homelessness in suburban Cook County. New members may join at any time.

The **Alliance Board of Directors** oversees all decision-making for the Continuum of Care and makes all final decisions and approvals on the CCP and Project Applications. Decisions are made by majority vote. The Alliance Board has designated spots for representatives with lived experience of homelessness and the Alliance is training YYA to be nominated for those decision-making positions in summer 2020. All CoC members receive regular email communication regarding YHDP and the Board of Directors receives monthly updates at Board meetings with space for questions and discussion.

The Youth Leadership Team will oversee Implementation efforts including CQI. **Work groups** will be created as needed to address specific needs. Alliance staff will separately conduct project monitoring according to HUD policy.

Statement of Need

While suburban Cook County has many assets and strengths, there is a critical need for additional youth-specific services and approaches that can better meet the needs of YYA.

North SubCook

84,275 experiencing poverty
47,759 are 30% rent burdened
23,978 are 50% rent burdened

Community Overview

30 Suburban Townships
131 municipalities
573 square miles
2.5 million residents
8% Asian
15% Black or African American
20% Hispanic or Latino
55% White not Hispanic
2% Two or more races

West SubCook

56,911 experiencing poverty
34,564 are 30% rent burdened
17,470 are 50% rent burdened

Chicago

South SubCook

115,763 experiencing poverty
40,326 are 30% rent burdened
24,330 are 50% rent burdened

Regional Challenges

Sprawling geography
Inadequate resources
Rising poverty rates
Fragmented systems

Community Assets

Suburban Cook County has many community assets that support young people. First and foremost is **the network of agencies focused on ending homelessness**, our Continuum of Care (CoC). The Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County coordinates the Cook County Continuum of Care (IL-511), which encompasses homeless assistance efforts throughout all of Cook County except for the city of Chicago. The Alliance brings together a range of services and housing options for people experiencing homelessness and in coordinating the annual application to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for homeless assistance grants, the Alliance brings approximately \$13 million per year to support over forty homeless programs in the region.

Over forty programs serve people experiencing homelessness, including YYA, in the three CoC Community Based Service Areas (North, West, and South). All homeless and housing and service projects participate in a single **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)**, giving us a wealth of data and information. Unaccompanied youth and young families can be served in all CoC programs as appropriate and some beds are designated for youth and young adults. Figure 4 shows the youth-designated beds across suburban Cook County (page 31).

The **Coordinated Entry (CE)** system, Entry Point, is the front door to the homeless services system. Anyone who is homeless or at-risk of homelessness can utilize the Entry Point call center and regional access points to get connected to resources to prevent and divert households from homelessness when possible, and if not, connect households to crisis and permanent housing options. Access points currently use a **standardized assessment tool for YYA**—the TAY (transition-aged youth) VI-SPDAT to triage and prioritize youth for housing interventions based on vulnerability. In addition, the homeless service providers who participate in the CE system have an array of required **CE trainings** that includes TAY competency, LBGTQ+ competency, youth mental health first aid, and trauma-informed care.

An additional resource for eligible YYA is the **Family Unification Program (FUP)**. The program is managed in partnership between DCFS, the Housing Authority of Cook County (HACC), and the CoC. The Family Unification Program provides a housing (FUP) voucher that can serve two populations: 1) 18-24 year old young adults who have aged out of the foster care system and have become homeless or are at risk of homelessness and 2) families with an open DCFS case in suburban Cook County when a lack of adequate housing is the primary factor in their open case. For the first population, the FUP voucher provides a temporary housing subsidy (up to 3 years) and up to 18 months of services. Young adults pay 1/3 of their income for housing, and the housing subsidy covers the remaining rent. For the second population, the FUP voucher provides a permanent housing subsidy with the household paying 1/3 of their income and the housing subsidy covering the remaining portion.

The Alliance has a track record of **successful system-wide and cross-sector initiatives** to prevent and end homelessness. Examples include passing the Illinois Homeless Students' Bill to use school district resources to prevent and end homelessness, supporting the launch of the first medical respite bed program in suburban Cook County, and leading an effort to end

veteran and chronic homelessness. Most recently, it includes leading a 100 Day Challenge to accelerate efforts to prevent and end youth homelessness. Through this initiative, a diverse group of cross-sector partners housed 79 households (made up of 111 people) in 100 days and engaged over 30 school districts in the region to improve their ability to identify and connect youth experiencing homelessness to CoC and community resources. These successes lay the foundation for more innovation and cross-sector partnerships through YHDP, and they are manifested by cross-sector partners’ consistent and significant participation on the Youth Leadership Team and in broader stakeholder sessions during this strategic planning process.

Figure 1. Youth-Designated Beds Across Suburban Cook County



Youth voice is valued in our community. The first Youth Action Board (YAB) was founded in March 2018. The mission of the Youth Action Board (YAB) is to strive for the elimination of youth homelessness in suburban Cook County. The YAB brings together youth with lived experiences of homelessness to inform the public about the issue, identify and work to eliminate barriers to housing, and advocate for increased resources to transition youth who are unstably housed into stable, permanent housing.

The YAB gained momentum in September 2018 in the lead-up to the 100 Day Challenge and has had steady attendance and development since this time. Due to the vast geography of suburban Cook County, our community began another YAB in the north suburbs in October 2019. The YABs are currently working on a training for school staff and students to destigmatize homelessness and provide resources about the CoC and Coordinated Entry. They have taken the initiative to provide outreach materials to places in the community like community colleges and public aid offices. All outreach activities benefit the wider population by reaching all who are experiencing homelessness. YAB members contribute to YHDP planning through membership on the Youth Leadership Team and participation in other planning activities such as Focus Groups, Community Planning Sessions and more.

Funders are involved and invested in the community and in YHDP. Generous support from multiple foundations has supported community participation in the 100 Day Challenge, the creation and active participation of Youth Action Board members in the planning process, and staff time to create and implement our community plan to end youth homelessness.



Data Sources Overview

Based upon multiple data sources, we can begin to understand the complex and often hidden experience of youth homelessness in suburban Cook County. The main sources of information include both existing and new data sources:

- Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)
- Point-in-Time (PIT) counts
- Voices of Youth Count
- System Partner Data
- Key Informant Interviews
- Focus Groups
- Youth and Community Stakeholder Surveys

The most recent data available was used in our analysis. Wherever possible, data reflects only suburban Cook County. Occasionally, data from the entire county (including Chicago) is used in absence of suburban-only data. This distinction is clearly noted. Data sources were used to better understand the overall picture of youth homelessness as well as the prevalence and needs of special populations. Findings were shared with the Youth Leadership Team (YLT) and Youth Action Boards (YABs) for review and conversation. The roles of the YLT and YAB are explained in the Governance section.

During our planning process it became clear that there were gaps and inconsistencies in data collection within our youth-serving systems. Some systems used varying definitions of homelessness, some collected the information only in case records and could not pull aggregate data, or some did not collect the information at all (e.g., sexual orientation, parenting status, homelessness). Some partners revised their data collection systems and processes to begin collecting this information, but the data was not yet available for inclusion in the plan.

Below, we have included an overview of each of these data sources, including their origins and the processes by which those data were collected. The findings from each of these sources are shared in the following section, *Youth Homelessness Data*.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

Suburban Cook County CoC providers enter all data into a shared HMIS system called ServicePoint. The CoC actively engages youth homeless providers to participate in HMIS, regardless of funding source for the program. Our HMIS team provides substantial support to HMIS users to ensure participation and high data quality.

Point-in-Time (PIT) Counts:

Youth-specific strategies were employed during the regularly scheduled 2017, 2019, and 2020 unsheltered PIT count. No unsheltered count took place in 2018.

Voices of Youth Count:

In 2016, the Alliance partnered with Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago on the Voices of Youth Count (VOYC) report, which counted, surveyed, and interviewed youth in 22 counties across the nation, including Cook County (Chicago and suburban areas). The VOYC report provides demographic information and a deeper understanding of the homeless youth population in all of Cook County. VOYC interviews and surveys collected data points including: history of housing instability, education, employment, benefits, foster care involvement, juvenile justice involvement, gender identity, and sexual orientation. Further, 40 in-depth interviews with youth who experienced homelessness and housing instability examine each youth's perspective on what contributed to their homelessness. This data gives us a better picture of the characteristics and causes of youth homelessness and helps inform the strategies we use to address homelessness in our community.

System Partner Data:

Multiple system partners contributed data to support YHDP planning efforts including:

- The K-12 education system
- The state of Illinois, which funds the Comprehensive Community Based Youth Services (CCBYS) programs serving youth under 18
- Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, which manages locally and federally funded workforce programs
- Illinois Juvenile Justice system
- Illinois Department of Child and Family Services
- Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (Domestic Violence-related data)

Youth Key Informant Interviews:

Key Informant Interviews were conducted with four youth to learn more about the current needs and resources within the homeless service system. The YAB developed the interview questions for stakeholder interviews (available in the Appendix). Interviews were conducted by the TA Provider from Abt Associates and Alliance Staff. Interview notes were coded to reflect themes. These themes were compared with findings from the other data sources to check for synergy and new ideas.

Focus Groups:

In the fall of 2019, approximately 130 providers, stakeholders, and youth with lived experience of homelessness participated in seven focus groups to identify needs and strategies to include in the CCP. Each focus group was dedicated to identifying the specific needs and experiences of the special sub-populations designated by HUD. Each focus group involved youth with lived experience of homelessness and stakeholders with direct experience working with YYA in the subpopulation.

Focus Groups included:

1. Minors (Youth under age 18)
2. Young Adults age 18-24
3. Pregnant and Parenting Youth
4. Youth Involved with Child Welfare, Juvenile Justice, or Both
5. LGBTQ+ Youth
6. Survivors of Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking
7. Workforce and Higher Education

Focus groups were moderated by our TA provider from Abt Associates and notes were analyzed for themes and opportunities. Themes were shared with 50 community members who attended a Community Forum on December 6, 2019. This provided additional opportunity for feedback, comments and ideas to create the goals and strategies needed to prevent and end youth homelessness in our community.

Youth and Stakeholder Surveys:

A key stakeholder survey was developed and completed by a diverse group of 42 community members in Fall 2019. In addition, a youth survey was developed by the YAB and Alliance Staff and completed by four YYA. Results were aggregated and themes were analyzed. The survey tool can be found in the Appendix.

Youth Homelessness: Data

Gap Analysis

While the community has many valuable resources, gaps in services exist, disparities persist, and housing and shelter options specifically for YYA are limited. Navigating the vast geography can be daunting and expensive for youth, experiences with certain providers or systems can be underwhelming or traumatizing at worst—causing some youth to disengage from services. Our plan names and addresses these challenges and gaps with the goal of ensuring that youth homelessness becomes rare, brief and one-time.

Input from Focus Groups, Youth and Stakeholder Surveys and Key Informant Interviews demonstrated many challenges and needs within suburban Cook County as illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Community Needs and Challenges

<p>Access</p> <p>Suburban Cook County is an expansive area. Resource and housing availability differ throughout the region with major gaps in some service areas.</p>	<p>There are many resources available for youth, but barriers exist to accessing them. Youth may not self-identify as homeless due to stigma, they may not know where to go, or the resources may not be culturally competent and safe for them to use.</p> <p>Limited transportation options exist to get YYA to services, shelter, work, school, appointments, social activities and daily life, etc.</p>	<p>Housing and Shelter</p> <p>Most of the emergency shelter in suburban Cook County is not youth-specific, is volunteer-run, and consists of pads on the floor at rotating locations. As a result, youth do not seek out shelter and are often undercounted.</p> <p>FUP Vouchers are a resource in the community but the program is not adequately staffed making the process too lengthy to be a viable housing option for YYA.</p> <p>Coordinated Entry prioritizes YYA, but a gap exists with providers also prioritizing them to ensure that YYA needs can be met with existing system resources.</p>	<p>YYA can be successfully diverted from homelessness. A lack of adequate diversion staff and flexible funding to assist at-risk YYA prohibits maximum diversion efforts and success.</p> <p>More Youth-Focused Housing Options are needed including youth-specific crisis housing, youth-specific RRH, Permanent Housing, Shelter and Transitional Housing for Minors.</p> <p>There is a need for more affordable housing options to give youth choice where they live and a longer-term option for stable housing.</p> <p>Culturally competent programs and resources to serve minors, young parents and LGBTQ+ youth are needed.</p>
<p>Education and Employment</p> <p>Schools can be a resource for YYA and set them up for ongoing success, but barriers exist for completing education. K-12 schools and Higher Ed lack a good process for identifying youth experiencing homelessness and students and staff may not know of available resources.</p> <p>Minors have a difficult time securing transportation to school and there are limited in-school supports like mental health care and childcare.</p>	<p>Challenges accessing and completing education hinders a youth from ongoing success. Low High School graduation attainment impacts preparedness for higher ed or employment programs.</p> <p>Employment options, training programs, and maintaining a job are impacted by a lack of transportation, limited quality childcare, drug-testing as a pre-req for employment program eligibility, and lack of programs to bring YYA skill levels up for good paying jobs.</p>	<p>Youth-Serving Systems</p> <p>YYA leaving Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare need consistent, coordinated, proactive transition planning and ongoing support.</p>	<p>Systems can be siloed and don't communicate well. Funding sources operating with differing definitions of homelessness create gaps in how YYA can be served without disruption.</p> <p>YYA need more positive connections and stronger supports. Systems Involvement creates disconnection, limiting the number of positive connections for YYA that can assist them with stability and success.</p>
<p>Health Care</p> <p>Access to Mental Health Care is critical for many YYA. However, there is a lack of accessible mental health resources, family counseling and substance abuse for YYA and long waiting lists for Medicaid Mental Health resources.</p>	<p>Healthcare access is critical for YYA. The community lacks accessible prenatal/post-partum/infant health care, and care that is culturally competent for LGBTQ+ YYA.</p>	<p>Culture and Systems</p> <p>Discrimination and criminalization impact YYA in our community. LGBTQ youth face discrimination in the home, in community and within social service programs. YYA and Youth of Color are often criminalized.</p>	<p>System-Level challenges include inequitable distribution of resources, a need for more YYA input into program design and ensuring that staff identities reflect the populations being served.</p>

The Stakeholder survey results identified the top three perceived factors contributing to youth homelessness:

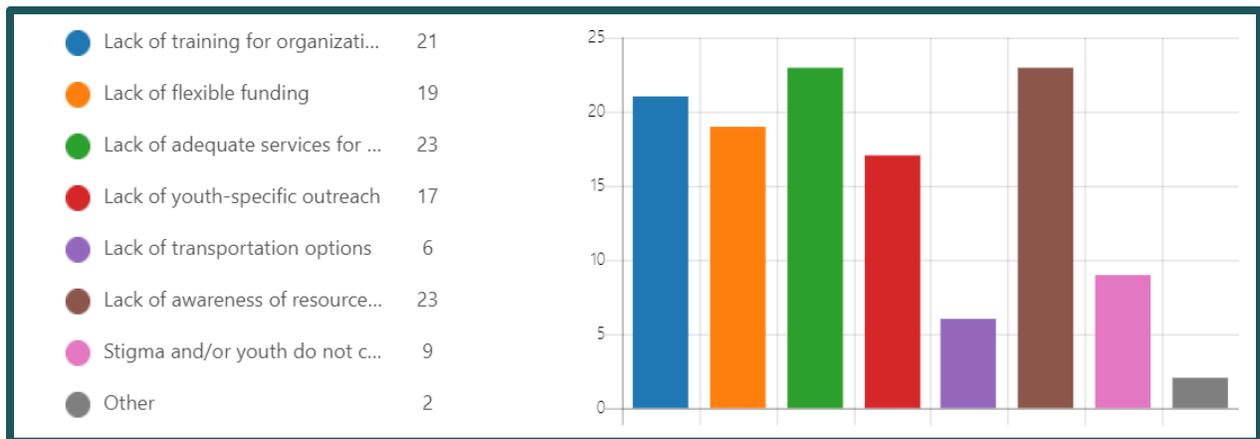
- 1) lack of affordable and accessible housing
- 2) poverty
- 3) youth mental health issues

If given three wishes to help end youth homelessness, a Youth Stakeholder would wish for:

“No lack of affordable and accessible housing, no human trafficking and sexual exploitation, and no condemnation in general.”

Stakeholder Survey Respondents also identified the top three main barriers to meet the needs of youth experiencing homelessness. All results are shown in Figure 3—the top three identified barriers were: Lack of adequate services for vulnerable populations, lack of awareness of resources and lack of training for organizations.

Figure 3. Barriers to Meeting the Needs of Youth Experiencing Homelessness



Youth Survey respondents identified many challenges from their own experiences, such as, *“Transportation barriers; Worries about stigma/being judged; Long wait lists; Unreliable services; Lack of culturally sensitive staff; Distrust of providers; Lack of clear communication and transparency; Lack of youth centers.”*

A major challenge in the vast territory of suburban Cook County is the lack of youth-specific shelter and housing options layered with geographic differences in resources. The shelter system for people 18 and older is volunteer-run, seasonal, and consists of pads on the floor of church basements. We have learned that most youth do not feel comfortable at these shelters. Figure 1 shows the availability of Youth-Specific Beds (Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing) across the region.

There is a preference through our Coordinated Entry system that prioritizes approximately ¼ of rapid re-housing beds to youth ages 18 to 24. In addition, we have a Coordinated Entry preference that prioritizes youth who are chronically homeless to Permanent Supportive

Housing resources first before other populations. We have limited full-time youth-specific outreach staff in suburban Cook County, and a lack of outreach staff generally. There is also only one youth drop-in center in the entire region.

Voices of Youth Count

Factors Contributing to Youth Homelessness

Chapin Hall’s Voices of Youth Count provides a comprehensive look at youth homelessness in all of Cook County (including Chicago and suburban areas). Overall findings are shared here to set the stage for the data points and descriptions that illustrate specific needs and prevalence in suburban Cook County.

According to the 40 in-depth interviews in the Voices of Youth Count (VOYC) in Cook County (including Chicago and suburban areas), numerous factors contribute to youth homelessness in our community. A major finding of the report is that *homelessness is not an isolated event but caused by deep and complex challenges that start at an early age.*⁵ Figure 4 summarizes the five most common themes from the youth interviews.

Figure 4. Five Most Common Themes to Youth’s Own Understanding

Five most common themes to youth’s own understanding of where their stories began



Systems involvement with child welfare and juvenile justice, as well as sexual minority status influenced housing instability. Family conflict was another major contributing factor to homelessness. This conflict was sometimes due to sexual orientation, abuse or neglect, and

⁵ Voices of Youth Count (2017). Cook County Report on Youth Homelessness: Findings from the In-depth Interviews Technical Report. Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago: Chicago, IL.

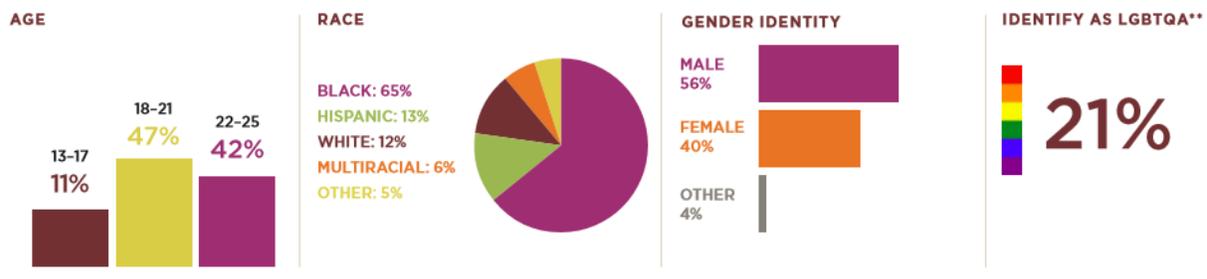
changing expectations of youth when they turn 18. Additionally, 45% of interviewed youth reported a death of a parent or caregiver contributed to their instability, 40% reported being physically harmed by someone, and about a quarter reported being forced to have sex with someone.

Some youth who become homeless are escaping abusive situations, are involved in the child welfare system, or are aging out of the foster care system with little income or housing options. In addition, homelessness may contribute to survival strategies such as selling drugs, shoplifting, robbery, or sex work, all of which make exiting homelessness more challenging. Approximately 48% of homeless or unstably housed 16- to 24-year-olds in Cook County were neither attending school nor employed when surveyed. Disruption to education is both caused by homelessness and contributes to future homelessness.

Poverty and economic hardship are other major contributors to youth homelessness. Our sprawling suburban geography means that poverty ranges from 4.2% (Streamwood) to as high as 26.5% (Chicago Heights). Lack of transportation within and out of high poverty areas make it difficult for people to access the resources and economic opportunities they need. Finally, a lack of affordable housing, underfunded education systems, and stagnant wages contributes to youth homelessness.

Cook County Wide (including Chicago) 862 homeless and unstably housed youth were found during the Voices of Youth Count – 23% of the youth were unsheltered the night before the count.⁶ Demographics are represented in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5. Voices of Youth Count Cook County, Demographics⁷

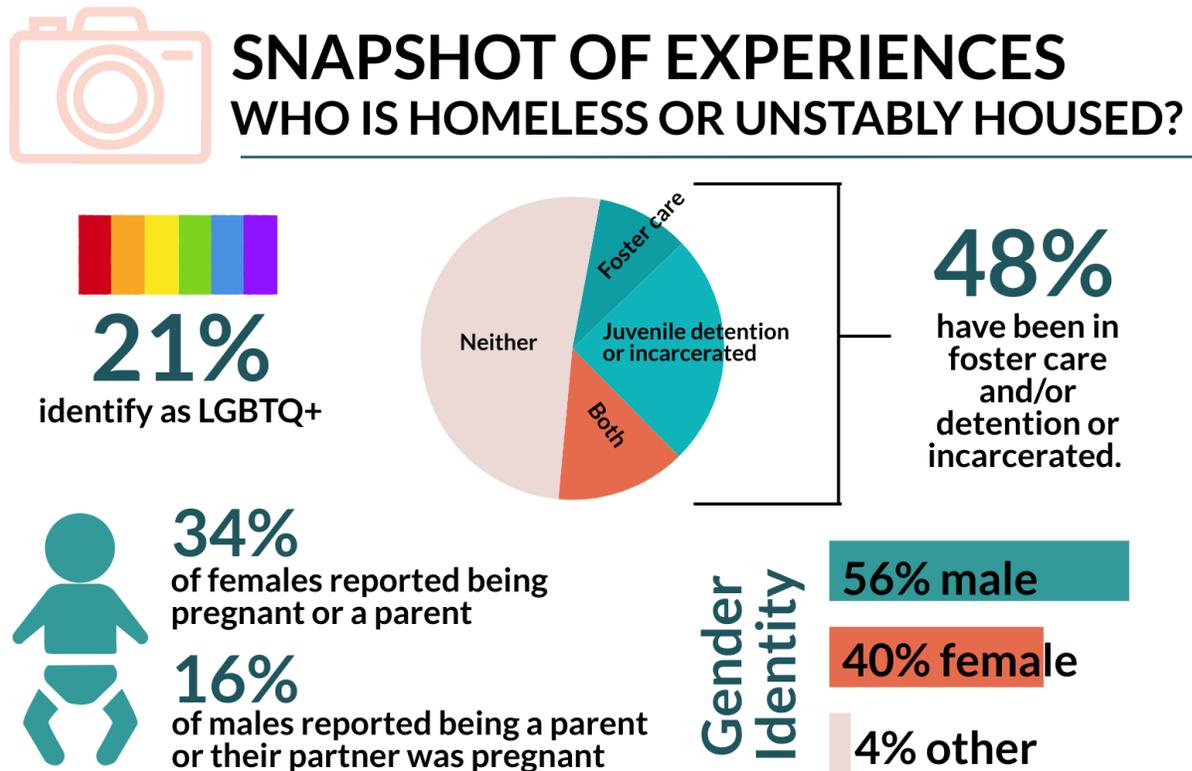


⁶ Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago. (2017, September). Youth homelessness in Cook County, Illinois: Findings from the youth count, brief youth survey, and provider survey. Technical report from the Voices of Youth Count Initiative. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

⁷ Voices of Youth Count (2017). Cook County, Illinois Youth Experiencing Homelessness. Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago: Chicago, IL.

Of the 16 to 24-year-olds in Cook County who were homeless or unstably housed, 48% were neither in school nor working. Figure 6 illustrates additional Key Findings from Cook County Voices of Youth Count.

Figure 6: Snapshot of Experiences⁸



Source: Voices of Youth Count

Youth served by homeless service providers: Suburban Cook County has limited housing resources specifically for youth who are experiencing homelessness, especially given the enormity of the area. Most of the emergency shelter in suburban Cook County is not youth-specific, is volunteer-run, and consists of pads on the floor at rotating locations. As a result, youth do not seek out shelter and are often undercounted.

In the 2019 Point-in-Time count, there were eighty 18 to 24-year-old households experiencing homelessness.⁹ Fifty-six were unaccompanied youth and 24 were parenting youth in 23 households with a total of 36 children. Table 1 further describes the results of the 2019 PIT count.

⁸ Voices of Youth Count (2017). Cook County, Illinois Youth Experiencing Homelessness. Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago: Chicago, IL.

⁹ 2019 PIT Count Data

Table 1. 2019 Point In Time Count Results			
	Sheltered	Unsheltered	Total
Unaccompanied Youth 18-24	52	4	56
Parenting 18-24	24	0	24
Total	76	4	80

Over the course of a year, 496 YYA households were served by homeless service providers that report data in the Homeless Management Information System (Emergency Shelter, Street Outreach, Transitional Housing, Safe Haven, and Supportive Services Only projects).

Table 2 shows the breakdown of unaccompanied homeless youth ages 18-24, minors under age 18 and parenting youth ages 18-24 that were served in the 12-month period between 10/1/2018 and 9/30/2019.¹⁰ Table 3 shows the demographics of these YYA including gender, ethnicity and race.¹¹

Table 2. Youth and Young Adults served in a 12-month period		
	Parenting Youth HH	Unaccompanied Youth HH
Total # Households	62	434
Total # Persons	152	448
# Children (Minors under 18)	n/a	87
# Young Adults (18-24)	n/a	361
# Parenting Youth (parents only)	57	n/a
Total Children in Parenting Households	87	n/a

¹⁰ HMIS data from 10/1/2018 – 9/30/2019 accessed on 12/12/2019

¹¹ HMIS data accessed on 12/12/2019

Table 3. Demographics of Youth and Young Adults served		
	Parenting Youth HH (n=57)	Unaccompanied Youth HH (n=448)
Gender		
Female	93%	56%
Male	7%	41%
Transgender or Gender Non-Conforming	--	2%
Ethnicity		
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	81%	87%
Hispanic/Latino	19%	12%
Race		
White	16%	23%
Black or African American	75%	67%
Asian	--	1%
Multiple Races	3%	5%

Youth seeking eviction prevention assistance

The Suburban Cook Entry Point Call Center is a telephone-based access point for people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Between **October 1, 2018 and September 30, 2019**, there were **707** callers within the 18-24 age range identified as in need of Homeless Prevention assistance by the Entry Point Call Center. Of those callers, **183** stated they were in a single person household (HH size: 1), with the remaining **524** callers residing in multi-person households (HH size: 2-8). Because the pre-screen assessment conducted by Call Center staff only asks for the number of persons in the household, we cannot definitively determine if the caller is a parenting youth.¹²

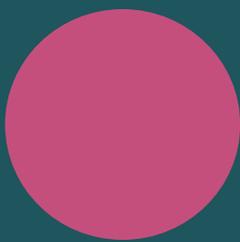
Suburban YYA served in Chicago

Some suburban youth and young adults seek services in the city of Chicago. While the Chicago HMIS system does not collect last known zip-codes, some individual providers do. One of the largest youth-serving homeless providers in Chicago, the Night Ministry, served 48 youth with suburban zip codes in a 12-month period.¹³ This was 12.5% of their clients. There are few LGBTQ+ specific services in suburban Cook County, so LGBTQ+ youth may feel more comfortable accessing services from the LGBTQ+ specific providers in Chicago.

¹² HMIS data accessed November 2019

¹³ The Night Ministry Data Accessed on August 16, 2019.

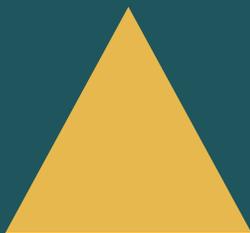
Special Populations



Pregnant and Parenting



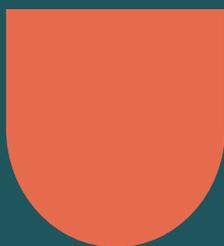
Minors



LGBTQ+



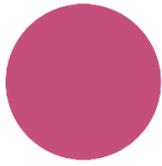
Child Welfare-Involved



Justice System-Involved



**Domestic Violence and
Human Trafficking Survivors**



PREGNANT AND PARENTING

57 parenting youth and their **87** children were served in one year
24 parenting youth are in shelter on any given night

Estimated Number of Homeless Pregnant or Parenting Youth

57 Parenting youth were served by CoC programs in a 12-month period.¹⁴ These parents had 87 children with them.

During the 2019 PIT count, there were 24 sheltered parenting youth and zero unsheltered parenting youth identified.¹⁵ These numbers do not include youth experiencing homelessness who may have been pregnant. Additionally, youth experiencing homelessness may have children staying elsewhere and would not be tracked within HMIS as parenting. Voices of Youth Count (Cook County) found that 34% of female respondents reported being pregnant or a parent and 16% of males reported being a parent or that their partner was pregnant.¹⁶

“Pregnant and Parenting Youth need access to a model that provides long-term services and understands how to harness the motivation of young parents and the unique developmental window new parents and babies are in.”

Community Stakeholder

Of the 145 HMIS intakes in a 12-month period from 10/1/2018 – 9/30/2019 that asked the pregnancy item, 7 Young Adults (4%) reported being currently pregnant.¹⁷ It’s important to note that 30% of these intakes had missing data for this item so this estimate is likely an undercount of homeless youth who were currently pregnant.

Estimated Number at Risk

In 2017, there were 1,011 births to teen mothers up to age 19 in suburban Cook County.¹⁸ There were an additional 4,124 births to mothers age 20-24.¹⁹ Some of these 5,135 young mothers may be experiencing homelessness or housing instability.

¹⁴ HMIS data 12/12/2019

¹⁵ 2019 PIT Count Data

¹⁶ Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago. (2017, September). Youth homelessness in Cook County, Illinois: Findings from the youth count, brief youth survey, and provider survey. Technical report from the Voices of Youth Count Initiative. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

¹⁷ HMIS data 12/12/2019

¹⁸ Teen Births by Resident County, Illinois Residents, 2017 Illinois Department of Public Health. Accessed December 9, 2019. <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/data-statistics/vital-statistics/birth-statistics/more-statistics>

¹⁹ Birth Demographics by Resident County, Illinois Residents, 2017 Illinois Department of Public Health. Accessed December 9, 2019. <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/data-statistics/vital-statistics/birth-statistics/more-statistics>

Specific Needs of Pregnant and Parenting Youth and Strategies to Address Them

USICH Core Outcome	Specific Needs of Pregnant and Parenting Youth
Stable Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing options that are safe, stable and nurturing for child(ren) and parent(s). • Resources and services that address their needs as a parent, and as a young adult. • Rapid-re-housing programs tailored to young families (addressing their needs as a parent, and as a young adult) • Aftercare services to ensure ongoing access to a professional network of support to help maintain housing.
Permanent Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills training on healthy relationships to strengthen relationships with family and other natural supports to create a strong and positive network of support. • Parenting skills training and supports to help them maintain custody of their child(ren).
Education and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-school supports such as mental health care, and childcare, to encourage completion of education. • Access to affordable childcare to expand employment options and the ability to maintain a job. • Need reliable and affordable transportation to attend school, work and transport child to daycare.
Social and Emotional Well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to pre-natal/post-partum and infant healthcare. • Celebration and support for their new family unit. • Access to mental health care and counseling to support their transition to parenthood. • Safety resources and counseling if a victim of domestic violence or trafficking.
Select Objectives and Actions to Address These Needs²⁰	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-system conference for Head Start, childcare, child welfare, and homeless service providers to educate providers about other systems and strengthen relationships. (Goal 5, Obj. H) • Raise awareness among childcare and Head Start providers about resources for homeless families, including childcare subsidies. (Goal 5, Obj. H) 	

²⁰ Action Plan available in the Appendix



MINORS

87 homeless minors served over the course of one year

347 unaccompanied homeless students in one school year

Estimated Number of Homeless Minors

Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs

In a 12-month period, 87 Minors were served by RHY programs.²¹ See Table 3 for more information.

Education

Within U.S. public schools, an unaccompanied homeless youth is a youth who meets the McKinney-Vento definition of *homeless* and is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. The school district data below reflects the number of unaccompanied homeless youth enrolled in public schools within the suburban Cook County CoC during the 2017-2018 school year. Not included in this data are students who were experiencing homelessness with their family and, therefore, not considered unaccompanied.

“Especially with everything going on [it was] difficult to stay in school. I didn’t look at school as education but a place to go between 7 and 3:30 to take time to plan where staying after school and at night and getting meals.”

Youth Stakeholder E reflects on experiencing homelessness as a minor

In school year 2017-2018, public schools in suburban Cook County reported 347 unaccompanied homeless youth (UHY).^{22,23} Table 4 shows the primary nighttime residence of unaccompanied homeless youth enrolled in schools within the CoC during the 2017-2018 school year. The vast majority (84%) of the UHY reported staying in a doubled-up situation. 13% reported staying in a shelter.

²¹ HMIS data accessed 12/12/2019

²² *Homeless Student Enrollment Data by Local Educational Agency- School Year 2017-18 ED Facts Data Documentation*, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC: ED Facts. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/edfacts/data-files/school-status-data.html>

²³ Note that 24 of the 152 LEAs in the CoC had to suppress their UHY enrolled count to comply with U.S. Department of Education data privacy guidelines, which require the suppression of LEA-level student counts between 0 and 2; as such, this total number (347) is an undercount of the actual number of unaccompanied homeless youth enrolled.

Table 4. Primary Nighttime Residence For Unaccompanied Homeless Youth (UHY) During The 2017-2018 School Year (N=347)				
	Shelter	Unsheltered	Hotel/Motel	Doubled Up
Percent of UHY	13.2%	1.6%	1.3%	83.9%

Estimated Number of At-Risk Minors

Youth under 18 face additional challenges as they are not yet legal adults and they can be particularly vulnerable to instability. It is challenging to estimate the number of minors at-risk of experiencing homelessness. One way to approach this estimate is to look at the number of minors served in Comprehensive Community Based Youth Services (CCBYS), a statewide program funded by IL Department of Human Services. These youth may be homeless or at-risk of experiencing homelessness due to family conflict or unsafe home environments.

There are over 30 designated CCBYS providers in the state who provide 24/7 services to youth ages 11 to 17 who are at risk of child welfare or juvenile justice involvement and/or have been locked out or run away from home. The purpose of the funding is to increase family reunification, preserve and stabilize families, and to divert or minimize involvement with the child welfare and/or juvenile justice systems.

CCBYS providers served 778 youth in suburban Cook County in FY 2019 (23 were age 18 or older).²⁴ Youth were referred to the program for a variety of reasons, most relevant are the 76 referred for “absent from home without parent consent” and 59 “parents will not allow youth to return home.”

²⁴ CCBYS Data Accessed November 7, 2019

Specific Needs of Minors and Strategies to Address Them

USICH Core Outcome	Specific Needs of Minors
Stable Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to emergency shelter and transitional housing in the suburbs specific to youth under age 18. • Access to affordable housing that will allow minors.
Permanent Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Family Counseling to strengthen and maintain connections with family members. • Need to develop additional connections as caregivers are aging/senior/homeless/otherwise unable to care for the youth.
Education and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional supports to ensure completion of High School. Without this, they are at significant risk of experiencing homelessness as a young person. • Better identification of youth who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness in schools and connection to McKinney-Vento and CCBYS services. • Consistent access to transportation options to support educational completion—school can be a stable place while experiencing homelessness. • Minors have competing priorities of education, employment and life skills to maintain their safety, stability and success.
Social and Emotional Well-Being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to mental health care resources to provide supports during a time of housing crisis and a vulnerable period of adolescent development. • Support in development of youth’s communication skills to navigate systems and advocate for themselves and their needs.
Select Objectives and Action Steps to Address These Needs²⁵	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen connections between community resources and K-12 stakeholders to more effectively identify and connect youth to McKinney-Vento resources, family reunification resources like Comprehensive Community Based Youth Services (CCBYS), Continuum of Care resources, and the Homeless Students’ Bill (HB261) prevention resources. (Goal 3, Obj. D) • Host trainings and meet and greets between schools and community resource partners, starting with the 7 districts with the highest number of unaccompanied youth. (Goal 3, Obj. D) • Create suburban shelter and transitional housing options for minors (i.e. host homes or new TH) (Goal 4, Obj. A) 	

²⁵ Action Plan available in the Appendix.



LGBTQ+

10% of homeless youth and young adults self-identified as transgender

10% of homeless youth and young adults self-identified as lesbian, bisexual, gay, or other sexual orientation

Estimated Number of Homeless LGBTQ+ YYA

LGBTQ+ youth are involved, and often over-represented, in youth-serving systems. We have specifically created this section to further explore data points related to these identities. However, we know that their experiences and needs are present in the following sections on sub-populations as well (e.g. Parenting Youth, Child Welfare).

Participation in the 100 Day Challenge heightened awareness that sexual orientation and true gender identity was not being tracked across the region in HMIS and that there are no programs in suburban Cook County that specialize in serving the LGBTQ+ population.

As a result, intake questions to better capture diversity in gender identity and sexual orientation, including preferred gender pronouns, were added in HMIS and went live in October 2019. These additional intake items allow the young adult to select from more options than what is allowable under HUD data standards. The first three months of data collection (11/1/2019-1/31/2020) show that 103 clients ages 16-24 completed an intake in CoC programs. Of these young adults that responded to the items, 10% self-identified as transgender and 10% self-identified their sexual orientation as either Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay or other.²⁶

Additionally, the survey results from the VOYC point-in-time count in Cook County provide more information about LGBTQ+ identifying YYA. 21% of respondents reported their sexual orientation or gender identity as LGBTQ+, which as supported by in-depth interview responses, is a common source of family conflict and consequent housing instability.²⁷ We understand that YYA may not feel comfortable disclosing personal information and these may be an under-count of LGBTQ+ YYA in our community.

“Once my dad figured out I was gay, things got worse and I left [my house]. At the time, it felt like my own safety was at risk.”

“M” reflects on becoming homeless

²⁶ HMIS data retrieved December 6, 2019.

²⁷ Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago. (2017, September). Youth homelessness in Cook County, Illinois: Findings from the youth count, brief youth survey, and provider survey. Technical report from the Voices of Youth Count Initiative. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

Extrapolating these initial percentages from the HMIS data over the total YA population served in 12 months (445) would estimate at least 45 youth identifying as transgender and at least 45 YA identifying as either Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay or other, over the course of a year. The VOYC percentage would estimate around 93 YYA experiencing homelessness identifying as LGBTQ+ in a year.

Estimated number of at-risk LGBTQ+ YYA

Nationally, it is estimated that about 10% of YYA identify as LGBTQ+. These YYA may or may not be out to their friends and families. LGBTQ+ youth and young adults have increased vulnerability for homelessness due to family rejection and it is estimated that up to 40% of homeless youth self-identify as LGBTQ+.

Extrapolating from the total community population for suburban Cook County between the ages of 10 and 24 (501,843), we can estimate that about 10%, or 50,184 youth ages 10-24, may identify as LGBTQ+. Some of these youth and young adults may be at risk of homelessness.

Specific Needs of LGBTQ+ Youth and Strategies to Address Them

USICH Core Outcome	Specific Needs of LGBTQ+ Youth
Stable Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stable housing that is safe and affirming of their identities • Crisis housing options that are available for all genders.
Permanent Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports related to increasing Family Acceptance including access to Family Counseling to strengthen and maintain connections with family members. • Assistance identifying natural supports to build a strong and affirming network of supports.
Education and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing discrimination in schools to encourage completion of high school and higher education. • Assistance gaining identification that lists their correct gender to allow for employment opportunities.
Social and Emotional Well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to mental health care and medical care that is affirming and tailored to their unique needs. • Remove discrimination within social service programs so that LGBTQ+ youth can fully access resources. • Provide specific supports and resources for victims of human trafficking and domestic violence. • Provide culturally competent parenting resources for LGBTQ+ and non-binary parents.

Select Objectives and Actions to Address These Needs²⁸

- Improve LGBTQ+ equity: Assess where LGBTQIA+ YYA do and don't feel safe across the CoC's programs. Develop a strategy to establish places that LGBTQ+ youth and young adults can access immediately and feel safe (i.e., that are not gender-segregated, that include private rooms and bathrooms, etc.). Ensure all homeless service providers are trained to provide safe and supportive services to LGBTQIA+ YYA and are held accountable for doing this. (Goal 7, Obj. B)
- Equity assessment: Assess for geographic, racial, LGBTQ+, gender and any other identity-based inequity at the system and provider levels that accounts for intersectionality, and develop a plan to ensure accountability in addressing inequity. (Goal 7, Obj. B)
- Provide intentional supports for youth to develop authentic and ongoing positive connections and relationships with family, friends, and community supports. (PYD Action)
- Encourage providers to intentionally hire staff who share an identity or background (e.g. housing instability, LGBTQ+ identity, etc.) of the youth served. Hiring peers is critical to a strong program and requires additional supports for these staff to be successful and avoid tokenization. (Client-Driven Supports Action)

²⁸ Action Plan available in the Appendix.



CHILD WELFARE-INVOLVED

10% of 18-24 year old homeless youth self-reported involvement with the child welfare system

60% of these youth reported aging out of foster care

Estimated number of homeless youth with Child Welfare experience

HMIS data from 10/1/2018 – 9/30/2019 indicated that 10% of 18-24 year olds (n=46) self-reported ever being involved with the child welfare system. Of these 46 young adults, 60% reported that they aged out of foster care.

National Youth In Transition Database Information in Illinois surveys the experiences of older youth in foster care before and after leaving care.²⁹ Of the 17 year-olds surveyed while in care, 14% had experienced homelessness in their lifetime. At age 19, 14% had experienced homelessness in the past two years. By age 21, 7% reported experiencing homelessness in the past two years. 18% reported having children while they were ages 19-21. This shows the potential need for homelessness resources designed to support young adults with foster care experience, and for those who are parenting—competencies and resources for families and young adults.

Estimated number of at-risk

Throughout Illinois in 2018, 27% of the foster care population was age 14 and up.³⁰ 889 young adults were in care statewide on their 18th birthday and 683 were still in care on their 19th birthdays. In suburban Cook County there are currently 49 young adults age 20 or older who are still in care of DCFS.³¹ These young adults are living in a variety of settings. The majority are living in a foster home (63%), 14% are living in Independent Living or a Transitional Living Program. The remainder are in another type of placement including a Group Home, Shelter, College or other location. Although these young adults will age out when they turn 21, DCFS can still provide financial support to youth enrolled in college full-time who maintain a GPA of C or better.

²⁹ National Youth in Transition Database: Data Snapshot FY 2014-2018, Illinois

³⁰ 2018 Illinois Profile, Transition Age Youth in Foster Care. Jim Casey Institute
<https://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/illinois-fosteringyouthtransitions-2018.pdf>

³¹ DCFS Data Accessed December 10, 2019

Specific Needs of Foster Youth and Strategies to Address Them

USICH Core Outcome	Specific Needs of Foster Youth
Stable Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved life skills training to better support their transition to independence from foster care. • Support identifying housing options. • Provide ongoing support after case closure to ensure that their housing remains stable (with family and independent settings).
Permanent Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance identifying natural supports and positive connections before age 21 to build a strong and affirming network of supports when they age out of care.
Education and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connections to available financial resources to encourage participation in Higher Education and job training programs.
Social and Emotional Well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to mental health care resources. • Access to resources on parenting to support their ability to maintain custody of their children.
Select Objectives and Actions to Address These Needs³²	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a standardized process to screen, identify, and track youth who are homeless and at-risk of homelessness who are involved with the child welfare, juvenile justice, education, and other systems and connect youth to appropriate services. Each system will have a designated liaison responsible for implementing the standardized process. (Goal 2, Obj. A) • Pass IL state legislation creating a liaison position at institutions of higher education to more effectively identify and support youth who have experienced homelessness and/or been involved in the child welfare system and prioritize campus housing during the school year and breaks. (Goal 2, Obj. A) • All youth who are homeless are tracked on an “active list” across systems. (Goal 2, Obj. B) • Implement new strategies to ensure youth exiting and involved with the foster care system do not become homeless. (Goal 3, Obj. B) • Providers across systems will develop new models to increase and track positive and lasting connections between YYA and trusted adults, peers, community, and other social supports. (Goal 5, Obj. C) • Provide intentional supports for youth to develop authentic and ongoing positive connections and relationships with family, friends, and community supports. (PYD Action) 	

³² Action Plan available in the Appendix.

- Pursue all available system information that can support positive connections. For example, with client consent, streamlining data sharing between CoC and DCFS staff to reconnect with youth-identified supports such as former foster parents. (Family Engagement Action)
- Partner with DCFS, family counseling programs, and other community resources to ensure that youth and their family members can access the support needed to strengthen relationships and allow for reunification when appropriate. These supports may include trainings on mediation, non-violent communication, restorative justice and circle keeping. (Family Engagement Action)

Dual Involvement: Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice

Youth who are involved with the child welfare system and/or the Juvenile Justice systems face unique challenges during this critical period of adolescent development. Voices of Youth Count findings for Cook County demonstrated the experiences within these systems and the overlap between the two. 49% of homeless youth surveyed had either been in foster care (10%), incarcerated (25%), or both (14%).³³

Our partner, the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), provided a snapshot of the number of youth and young adults dually involved in both the child welfare and the juvenile justice systems. These numbers change and fluctuate often. As of September 9, 2019 there were 1,233 Dually Involved Youth (DIY) throughout Illinois. Cook County (including Chicago) had 474 (38%) of all DIY throughout the state.³⁴

Of the total 474 Cook County DIY, 47% (224 youth) were between the ages of 11 and 17 years old. 53% (250 Young Adults) were ages 18, 19 or 20+. Within the south suburbs of Cook County, there were 37 dually involved youth on 11/8/19.³⁵

³³ Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago. (2017, September). Youth homelessness in Cook County, Illinois: Findings from the youth count, brief youth survey, and provider survey. Technical report from the Voices of Youth Count Initiative. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

³⁴ DCFS Data Accessed on November 15, 2019

³⁵ DCFS Data Accessed on November 15, 2019



JUSTICE SYSTEM-INVOLVED

39% of homeless youth have been involved in the justice system

Estimated Number of Homeless Youth with Juvenile Justice Experience

Our HMIS data does not currently track experience in the juvenile justice system. Using the findings from VOYC that 39% had been involved with the Justice System or both the Justice and Child Welfare systems, we can estimate that 234 homeless youth served in a 12-month period may have involvement with the justice system.

Estimated number at-risk

Probation Services has approximately 3,500 cases a year in Cook County and at any one time is usually active with 3,000 cases³⁶. The approximate caseload at each of our suburban locations is included below to share a sense of the distribution of cases throughout suburban Cook County. The suburban cases represent about 20% of all Probation cases in Cook County. These numbers are low as they do not include cases that originated somewhere else and were transferred in, as well as the diversion cases being monitored. Some of the 3,500 youth currently on probation may be at risk of experiencing homelessness.

Number of Juvenile Probation Cases by Suburban Location:

- Skokie: 73
- Rolling Meadows: 135
- Maywood: 133
- Bridgeview: 80
- Markham: 296
- **Total Suburban Juvenile Probation Cases: 717**

“[Juvenile Detention] calmed me down – I was away from everyone who mattered to me and everything I knew. I knew I needed to stop doing what I was doing. Settled down for a year. Was catching cases every month [before that].”

Youth Stakeholder on the impact of Juvenile Detention

³⁶ Cook County Juvenile Court and Probation Services data accessed November 15, 2019

Specific Needs of Juvenile Justice Youth and Strategies to Address Them

USICH Core Outcome	Specific Needs of Juvenile Justice Youth
Stable Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth with criminal records may face additional barriers to housing. • Supports for family members to increase their ability to care for and house their children after they turn 18. • Improved life skills training to better support their transition to independence from juvenile justice. • Locating housing options and location that are safe from gang violence—depending on a youth’s affiliation. • Need for landlord engagement to remove barriers to housing access.
Permanent Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance developing positive relationships before a YA exits. This helps build a strong and affirming network of supports that is available to them when they return to their community. • Supports in identifying new relationships outside of gang affiliation.
Education and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth with criminal records may face additional barriers to employment and need legal services for record sealing and expungement.
Social and Emotional Well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to mental health care is critical for these YYA as well as a shift from seeing it as wellness versus a mental illness.
Select Objectives and Actions to Address These Needs³⁷	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement new strategies to ensure youth exiting and involved with the juvenile justice system do not become homeless. Evaluate Transition planning within DJJ. (Goal 3, Obj. C) • Provide intentional supports for youth to develop authentic and ongoing positive connections and relationships with family, friends, and community supports. (PYD Action) 	

³⁷ Action Plan available in the Appendix.



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

10% of young adults experiencing homelessness were fleeing domestic violence at the time of intake

Illinois is ranked **11th** in the nation for number of cases of human trafficking

Estimated number YYA experiencing domestic violence and human trafficking

Domestic Violence

According to data from the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, 988 Youth and Young Adults ages 12-24 in suburban Cook County were fleeing domestic violence and seeking services in a 12-month period. Of that number, 804 were young adults ages 18-24 and 184 were youth ages 12-17 were fleeing violence.³⁸ One hundred five of these youth and young adults requested help finding shelter or housing. Information from HMIS³⁹ counted 38 young adults (8.5%) YYA who were currently fleeing from Domestic Violence at the time of intake in a 12-month period. This is an undercount as HMIS is not the primary system to capture services for YYA fleeing DV.

The top needs of YYA fleeing domestic violence are outlined in Table 5 indicating a high demand for Legal Advocacy and Emotional Counseling.⁴⁰

Needs Identified at Intake	Percent of YYA	Needs Identified at Intake	Percent of YYA
Legal Advocacy	37%	Shelter OR Housing	11%
Emotional Counseling	36%	Shelter	9%
Crisis	23%	Housing	6%
Referral	21%	Financial	5%
Legal	14%	Employment	4%
Education	12%		

³⁸ Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority data accessed December 2019 for time period 7/1/2018 – 6/30/2019

³⁹ HMIS Data 12/12/2019

⁴⁰ Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority data accessed January 2020

Human Trafficking

As of 2017, Illinois ranked 11th in the nation for number of cases of Human Trafficking.⁴¹ Between 2007 and 2017 almost 3,000 people have been trafficked in Illinois according to data from the Jane Addams Center for Social Policy and Research.⁴² Trafficking is both a state-wide problem and is local to suburban Cook County and Chicago.

In 2018, there were 141 Allegations of Human Trafficking among children and young adults ages 10 -20 years old in the four regions in Illinois (Central, Cook, Northern and Southern).⁴³ 45% of the allegations (n=63) occurred in Cook County (including Chicago).

Gender and age information regarding allegations demonstrates that minors are extremely vulnerable to human trafficking. Of the 141 allegations state-wide⁴⁴ in 2018, 104 were female (73%) with an average age of 14.36. There were 34 allegations involving males (24%) with average age of 12.44. Three people had an unknown gender (2%).

Of the 145 HMIS intakes in a 12-month period for Minors from 10/1/2018 – 9/30/2019 that asked the RHY trafficking items, 6 Youth (4%) reported ever receiving something in exchange for sex (e.g. money, food, drugs, shelter).⁴⁵ It’s important to note that 77% of these intakes had missing data for this item so this estimate is likely an undercount of homeless youth who have experienced trafficking.

Specific Needs of Survivors of Human Trafficking and Domestic Violence and Strategies to Address Them

USICH Core Outcome	Specific Needs of Survivors of Human Trafficking and Domestic Violence
Stable Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidential, zero barrier crisis shelter and housing. • Provide legal assistance to remove charges against the YYA related to their trafficking or experience of DV to assist with seeking housing and employment.
Permanent Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance for the YYA to identify natural supports that are safe and not associated with a perpetrator of violence.

⁴¹ Hounmenou, C. (2018). Scope of human Trafficking in Illinois & Beyond. Jane Addams Center for Social Policy and Research Jane Addams School of Social Work University of Illinois at Chicago.

⁴² Illinois Human Trafficking Task Force Report. July 2018
[https://www2.illinois.gov/dcfs/aboutus/policy/Documents/2018 Illinois Human Trafficking Task Force Report.pdf](https://www2.illinois.gov/dcfs/aboutus/policy/Documents/2018%20Illinois%20Human%20Trafficking%20Task%20Force%20Report.pdf)

⁴³ DCFS Data Accessed on November 18, 2019.

⁴⁴ Demographic data not available by region.

⁴⁵ HMIS data 12/12/2019

Education and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide legal assistance to remove charges against the YYA related to their trafficking or experience of DV to assist with seeking housing and employment.
Social and Emotional Well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to mental health care is critical for these survivors to help them deal with their traumatic experiences.
Select Objectives and Actions to Address These Needs⁴⁶	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All service providers trained on best practices [in serving survivors of human trafficking, sexual exploitation and domestic violence]. (Goal 5, Obj. I) • Regional providers and systems (i.e. diversion court) that serve survivors of human trafficking, sexual exploitation, and domestic violence trained in the process to refer eligible clients to CoC housing resources and support. (Goal 5, Obj. I) 	

Disparities

Voices of Youth Count found that LGBTQ+ youth, foster youth, males, and youth with juvenile justice histories have higher incidences of homelessness and housing instability in Cook County (includes suburban and Chicago youth). Twenty-one percent of respondents reported their sexual orientation as LGBTQ+. In addition, 49% of youth who are homeless had either been in foster care (10%), incarcerated (25%), or both (14%). Of the identified homeless or unstably housed youth in Cook County, 65% identify as Black or African American, despite making up only 24% of the overall Cook County population. Finally, 56% of youth who are homeless identify as male, 40% female, and 4% other.

The CoC analyzed disparities for all populations in HMIS, including youth. We found that African American young adults represent 15% of the suburban Cook County population but have 54% of entries into shelter over the course of a year.⁴⁷ The Coordinated Community Plan works to address this over-representation and achieve more equitable outcomes for youth of color, LGBTQ+ youth and other groups of youth who experience disparities within youth-serving systems.

Additional Information

Youth Employment—Opportunity Works Youth Employment Program

The Opportunity Works program provides employment training specifically for youth 16-24 living in suburban Cook County. Of the roughly 356 youth served in the 2018 program year, 45 youth (12%) reported experiencing homelessness.

⁴⁶ Action Plan available in the Appendix.

⁴⁷ Alliance Strategic Plan <http://www.suburbancook.org/strategicplan2019>

New YHDP Projects

New YHDP Project List

The Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County was awarded a two-year Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program grant in the amount of \$6,078,027. To better meet the needs of youth and young adults experiencing homelessness, the following YHDP-funded Projects embody the core principles and contain new innovations in our community.

The YHDP funded projects include:

- Planning Grant: Support to create and implement a plan to prevent and end youth homelessness and involvement of youth with lived experience in planning, project design, and implementation.
- Project 1: Enhanced Data System
 - Expand HMIS database capacity to incorporate the new YHDP programs, track and report outcomes, and meet Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) goals.
- Project 2: Enhanced Coordinated Entry and System Navigation
 - Youth Coordinated Entry System Manager (Project 2a): expand and develop a youth-coordinated entry system, including managing system navigators and cross-system coordination.
 - Youth Coordinated Entry Training and Engagement Manager (Project 2a): Provide training, coaching, and support to ensure YHDP projects adhere to best practices and YHDP principles, lead youth-specific CE marketing, and lead system-focused youth leadership development and engagement.
 - System Navigators (Project 2b): Frontline staff working across the entire suburban region to identify young adults ages 14-24 who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness through community outreach and referrals from the education, justice, and welfare system. Using a pool of flexible resources, navigators will work to divert youth from homelessness if possible, and if not—connect young adults to crisis and permanent housing options and other non-housing resources and benefits.
- Project 3: Joint Component Transitional Housing-Rapid Re-Housing (TH-RRH)
 - Young Adults seeking shelter can immediately access crisis housing (TH) until a move to permanent housing (RRH). Youth can also bypass TH to move into another permanent destination.

The following tables include more information on each project to be funded by HUD YHDP funds and other sources.

Planning Grant	
2-year YHDP Budget \$90,560 (plus 25% match) = \$113,200	Funding to support project management, YHDP Liaison position, Youth Action Boards, and authentic youth engagement in the planning process.

Project 1: Enhanced Data System	
Program Summary	Expanded HMIS to include new YHDP programs.
Target Population	Not applicable
HUD Homeless Definition	Not applicable
HUD CoC Project Type	HMIS
Timeframe	Not applicable, activity is ongoing
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand HMIS to incorporate the new YHDP programs Enhance the CoC’s ability to track and report on data points, incorporate participation of new providers, projects, and project types; provide HMIS support to new projects, and reach CQI goals on data quality This will include tracking of diversion/prevention services
Outputs/Outcome Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements in data collected on outflow, length of time waiting for services, pending, and exits for youth population; Increased and improved participation in HMIS
Innovation Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will allow us to reach CQI goals on data quality and to refine our system to better meet the needs of youth
2-year YHDP budget \$150,000 (plus 25% match) = \$187,500	Cost is based on adding 1 additional FTE to the HMIS team to manage data collection, training, provider participation, and reporting to support YHDP.

Project 2a: Enhanced Coordinated Entry and System Navigation	
Program Summary	Creating two new positions, the Youth Coordinated Entry System Manager and the Youth Coordinated Entry Training and Engagement Manager. The purpose of these positions is to strengthen the operation of the entire youth coordinated entry system from identification to housing by directing and supporting the 6 system navigators, ensuring all providers are using best practices, marketing the youth CE system, and engaging youth action boards in work to build and implement the system.

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Target Population	Unaccompanied youth ages 18-24 and unaccompanied minors ages 14-17, including all special populations
HUD Homeless Definition	Categories 1, 2, and 4
HUD CoC Project Type	CE-SSO
Timeframe	Not applicable, activity is ongoing
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directing the development of youth-specific and youth-appropriate coordinated entry system • Directing and supporting the 6 system navigators • Facilitating youth-specific case conferencing • Building relationships with system partners (i.e. child welfare, juvenile justice, education) to improve coordination and access to resources across systems • Providing training, coaching, and support to youth projects to ensure projects have capacity to adhere to YHDP principles, best practices, and YHDP goals • Lead youth-specific CE marketing and engagement • Lead system-focused youth leadership development and engagement
Outputs/Outcome Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve identification of youth who are homeless • Improve coordination between other systems (i.e. justice, welfare, education) • Increase youth leadership development and participation in CCP implementation • Decrease the number of youth who become homeless • Decrease the length of time youth are homeless (i.e. rapidly resolve homelessness)
2-year YHDP budget \$286,000 (plus 25% match) = \$357,500	Cost is based on adding 2 FTEs to the CE team.

Project 2b: Enhanced Coordinated Entry and System Navigation	
Program Summary	6 System Navigator/Outreach/Diversion staff spread across CoC (1 NE, 1 NW, 1 W, 3 in S) that will identify youth, divert youth if possible, and if not, connect youth to crisis and permanent housing options and other non-housing resources and benefits.
Target Population	Unaccompanied youth ages 18-24 and unaccompanied minors ages 14-17, including all special populations
HUD Homeless Definition	Categories 1, 2, and 4

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HUD CoC Project Type	RRH-Diversion
Timeframe	Average 30 days
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing navigation services that support youth in accessing housing resources and connecting to other services in the area (i.e. CCBYS resources for under 18) • Support youth/their families to stay stabilized in housing, including through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Limited emergency housing financial assistance ○ Mediation ○ Family/individual counseling ○ Food assistance ○ Referrals • Flexible funding for diversion/rapid exit
Outputs/Outcome Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease the number of youth who become homeless • Decrease the length of time youth are homeless (i.e. rapidly resolve homelessness)
Innovation Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pop-up drop-in sites (i.e. libraries, community centers, day-centers, etc.) • Support youth who are homeless from other systems (i.e. justice, welfare, education) • Market youth resources to community stakeholders • Mobile specialized staff to support shelters and day-centers • Divert or rapidly resolve homelessness for youth and young adults who have safe housing options with family or friends • Stipends for peer outreach workers
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to YHDP/YAB principles, CQI, participation in youth leadership team/working groups, and supporting the Youth Action Board/authentic youth engagement • Minimum salary requirements to ensure highly skilled staff
2-year YHDP Budget \$963,600 (plus 25% match) = \$1,204,500	Estimated annual cost incorporates (\$53,000 per system navigator position x 6 positions) = \$318,000 + \$120,000 in diversion flexible funding = \$438,000 + 10% admin = \$43,800

Project 3: Transitional Housing-Rapid Re-Housing Joint	
Program Summary	Young Adults seeking shelter can immediately access crisis housing (TH) until a move to permanent housing (RRH). Youth can also bypass TH to move into another permanent destination.
Target population	Unaccompanied youth ages 18-24 including all special populations.
HUD Homeless Definition	Categories 1, 2, and 4
HUD CoC Project Type	TH-RRH
Timeframe	Typically, 12-18 months assistance, but up to 36 months in RRH for more vulnerable youth (exception needed). Assistance would be responsive to individual need, using a progressive engagement approach.
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short and medium-term crisis housing (TH) • Permanent housing assistance (RRH) • Housing location and landlord outreach • Financial assistance • Case management • Connections to health, mental health, education and employment • Strengthen positive connections with family, friends, and community supports. • Diversion/rapid resolution/family reunification considered throughout time in project • Flexible funding for diversion/rapid resolution/family reunification • Support youth leadership and participation in Youth Action Boards
Outputs/Outcome Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase # of youth who exit to stable housing • Decrease the length of stay/wait for housing • Increase # of youth in stable housing for 12 months or more • Decrease # of youth returning to homelessness after 12 months
Innovation Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressive engagement, frame the program as short-term but extend as needed • Strengthening connections with a youth’s support network (i.e. family and friends) and considering those connections as potential housing options when safe and appropriate (diversion/rapid exit to family and friends always an option). • Specialized services that help achieve all USICH core outcomes (i.e. stable housing, education/employment, positive connections, well-being)

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aftercare services for up to 24 months after last rental assistance payment (exception needed) • Shared housing when appropriate to reduce housing costs • Provide services to Family Unification Program recipients who are 23 years old or older
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to YHDP/YAB principles, CQI, participation in youth leadership team/working groups, and supporting the Youth Action Board • Programs are required to serve all-genders (i.e. not gender-segregated) • Youth Action Board creation/opportunities for authentic youth engagement and support built into program • Transportation support built into the program • Formal agreements with local employment and youth employment programs (i.e. WIOA and Opportunity Works) or plan to create agreements • Beds will be available to youth across the entire CoC geography • There must be at least twice as many RRH beds as TH beds in each project • Youth can be in TH only or RRH only • 15:1 or 20:1 case management ratio; same case manager from intake through aftercare • Wide array of community partnerships and/or internal resources for housing navigation, employment, education, mental health, health.
2-year YHDP Budget \$4,587,867 (plus 25% match) = TBD (dependent on leasing amount)	<p>Cost is based on the amount to run existing TH and RRH programs in suburban Cook County. Using these estimates, this funding will provide approximately 80 units of TH and 160 RRH units at any given time. However, the projected numbers served could be lower if projects have more robust services/staffing costs than existing programs.</p>

Continuous Quality Improvement

CQI Process

Our vision is to end youth homelessness in suburban Cook County by 2024. Our CQI process will measure progress towards our vision, key principles, and the USICH core outcomes for youth including: achieving stable housing, building permanent connections, achieving education and employment goals, and developing social-emotional well-being. The CQI process will ensure that implementation of our plan to prevent and end youth homelessness is data-driven, examined frequently, responsive to youth needs, accountable to strategic efforts, and effective in supporting achievement of our intended outcomes.

Our CQI process involves taking baseline measurements of key outcomes to track our progress towards our goals and objectives. The Youth Leadership Team will review results at least quarterly and discuss any corrections that are necessary. CQI results will be shared with Alliance members and YHDP partners. If gaps in data quality or availability are identified, efforts will be made to strengthen and access the necessary information.

CQI Elements and Data Sources

HMIS will be used to establish baselines and track system-level goals. Additionally, consumer feedback mechanisms will be developed such as youth surveys and holding interviews with young people to determine if they feel supported in ways that would indicate projects/staff are upholding the YHDP principles.

Our measurable outcomes are linked to the Objectives in our Action Plan. Example outcome measures may include:

Objective 3b: Implement new strategies to ensure youth exiting and involved with the foster care system do not become homeless.

Measure: Reduction in youth who become homeless after discharge from justice and child welfare system.

Objective 5c. Providers across systems will develop new models to increase and track positive and lasting connections between YYA and trusted adults, peers, community, and other social supports.

Measure: Increase number of youth who have at least one permanent connection to an adult that provides positive guidance and support.

Objective 3a. Develop a process, protocol, staffing, and flexible resources to divert or rapidly exit youth entering the homeless system.

Measure: Decrease the length of time between engagement and diversion/shelter/TH

Objective 1a. Youth voice and experience is at the center of assessing, planning and implementing all strategies and programming.

Measures: Increase number of youth participating in YAB meetings. Increase number of YABs in the region

Additionally, there is a conscious effort to make strides towards the True Colors United, four pillars of youth engagement.⁴⁸ These benchmarks will be measured among YAB members via interviews and surveys to assess our community's progress in further strengthening Youth-Adult partnerships. The Benchmarks include:

1. Set Leaders Up For Success
2. Reduce Barriers to Participation
3. Set Clear and Realistic Deadlines
4. Highlight the Impact of the Work

Signatures From Official YHDP Representatives

Signatures of approval and ongoing support from official representatives of Youth Action Boards, Continuum of Care Board, Child Welfare and Local Government Agency are included in the Appendix.

Appendix

1. Partner Chart
2. Action Plan
3. Signature Pages from Official YHDP Representatives
4. Youth System Map
5. Planning Process Overview
6. System Modeling
7. Key Youth Informant Interview Questions
8. Stakeholder Survey Tool

⁴⁸ True Colors United Youth Collaboration Toolkit <https://learn.truecolorsunited.org/youth-collaboration-toolkit/#1491841267748-2db4d6af-eabe>

Appendix 1. Partner Chart

Threshold 2—Required Partners bold and shaded.

Partners	Name of Stakeholder	Description of Organization and Involvement	Commitment to Action
CoC Board (required) and CoC agency	Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County Board of Directors	HMIS and CE lead agency. Administers the annual PIT count. Helps lead the YHDP lead team and facilitate the YAB to develop the CCP. Board makes final approval of YHDP Projects and Plan.	Will serve as the lead agency to implement the CCP. This includes but is not limited to: ensuring youth are meaningfully engaged implementing the CCP, staffing working groups, providing program monitoring, managing new CE processes, leading the CQI process, and serving as the project manager for the CCP action plan.
Youth Advisory Board (required)	South Youth Action Board	Formed in spring of 2018. Are co-leaders in the process to develop the CCP. Participates on the YHDP lead team, planning sessions, and project review team.	Will support implementation of the CCP and CQI process.
Youth Advisory Board (required)	North Youth Action Board	Formed in fall of 2019. Are co-leaders in the process to develop the CCP. Participates on the YHDP lead team, planning sessions, and project review team.	Will support implementation of the CCP and CQI process.

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Partners	Name of Stakeholder	Description of Organization and Involvement	Commitment to Action
Local and State Government (required)	Cook County Department of Planning	Manages county ESG, CDBG, and HOME funding. Participated in YHDP planning meetings.	Will explore ways to leverage county resources to address youth homelessness and will ensure ESG/CDBG-funded projects participate in CE and attend relevant trainings to work effectively with TAY. Will consider supporting state legislation to more effectively prevent and end youth homelessness.
Public Child Welfare Agency (required)	Illinois Department of Child and Family Services	Part of YHDP lead team and focus groups. Has provided data on the child welfare system and coordinated meetings with multiple DCFS staff members to develop the CCP.	Will help support the implementation of the CCP to ensure that youth who exit the welfare system do not become homeless. This includes but is not limited to: developing a tool to identify youth at-risk of homelessness, increasing positive connections for youth aging out of care, improving marketing of DCFS/CoC resources to youth aging out of care, participating in a cross-sector working group to reduce homelessness, supporting PHAs to apply for more FUP vouchers, utilizing a Kinship navigator to connect runaway and homeless minors to family members.

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Partners	Name of Stakeholder	Description of Organization and Involvement	Commitment to Action
Local and State Government	Illinois Department of Human Services	Oversee state-funded youth grants and Comprehensive Community Based Youth Services (CCBYS) programs that serve runaway and homeless minors. Participated in YHDP focus-groups.	Will provide data on CCBYS outcomes and will explore ways to better market and connect youth to state-resources.
Local and State Government	State Representative Michelle Mussman (56 th District)	Part of YHDP lead team and focus groups. Has a staff member on the CoC board. Lead the effort to pass the Homeless Student’s Bill in 2017. Sits on the IL House Appropriations Committee for Human Services and Elementary and Secondary Education	Will explore legislative initiatives to more effectively address homelessness for youth who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness and will coordinate meetings with relevant state agencies like the Illinois State Board of Education.
ESG Program Recipient	Connections for the Homeless	Participates in northern CoC council; contributes to strategy to end homelessness (10+ years); engages in street outreach, shelter, prevention, housing (10+ years); operates youth TH programs (4+ years) Part of the YHDP lead team and focus groups.	Will support the implementation of the YHDP CCP and will ensure staff are trained to effectively serve TAY.

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Partners	Name of Stakeholder	Description of Organization and Involvement	Commitment to Action
ESG Program Recipient	Housing Forward	PSH, RRH, Interim Housing & Medical Respite, Shelter, Employment Readiness, Case Management, Non-CoC funded Housing, Street outreach, and prevention (10+ years); walk-in center (CE access point) for the West region. Part of YHDP lead team and participated in YHDP planning sessions.	Will support the implementation of the YHDP CCP and will ensure staff are trained to effectively serve TAY.
ESG Program Recipient	JOURNEYS The Road Home	Provides emergency shelter and case management in the North suburbs. Part of the YHDP lead team; participate in YHDP planning sessions.	Will support the implementation of the YHDP CCP and will ensure staff are trained to effectively serve TAY.
ESG Program Recipient	Northwest Compass	Regional lead and walk-in center (CE access point) for the North region (3 years); sits on the Alliance Board (10 years); provides TH and PSH, some of which is for youth. Facilitated privately funded HYPE program (Helping Youth on a Path to Empowerment). Part of the YHDP lead team; participate in YHDP planning sessions.	Will support the implementation of the YHDP CCP and will ensure staff are trained to effectively serve TAY.

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Partners	Name of Stakeholder	Description of Organization and Involvement	Commitment to Action
ESG Program Recipient	Respond Now	Walk-in center (CE access point) for the South region (3 years); sits on the Alliance Board (10 years); provides housing resources for all populations	Will ensure staff are trained to effectively serve TAY. Is providing services as resources allow to FUP clients 23 and older that DCFS cannot cover.
ESG Program Recipient	South Suburban Pads	Provides street outreach, shelter, and housing in the South region. Participated in YHDP planning sessions.	Will ensure staff are trained to effectively serve TAY.
ESG Program Recipient	Together We Cope	Walk-in center (CE access point) for South region.	Will ensure staff are trained to effectively serve TAY.
Local and State Law Enforcement and Judges	Cook County State's Attorney's Office	Participated in YHDP planning sessions.	Will provides training on human trafficking to community partners.
Early Childhood Development and Child Care provider	Children's Home and Aid	Participated in YHDP planning sessions.	Will organize a cross-sector conference in April 2020 for early childhood, DCFS, and homeless service providers.
Early Childhood Development and Child Care provider	Easterseals	Participated in YHDP planning sessions and a signatory on MOU with CoC to improve coordination between systems.	Will organize a cross-sector conference in April 2020 for early childhood, DCFS, and homeless service providers.
Early Childhood Development and Child Care provider	Illinois Action for Children	Participated in YHDP planning sessions and a signatory on MOU with CoC to improve coordination between systems.	Will organize a cross-sector conference in April 2020 for early childhood, DCFS, and homeless service providers.

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Partners	Name of Stakeholder	Description of Organization and Involvement	Commitment to Action
Early Childhood Development and Child Care Provider	The Ounce of Prevention	Participated in YHDP planning sessions and a signatory on MOU with CoC to improve coordination between systems.	Will organize a cross-sector conference in April 2020 for early childhood, DCFS, and homeless service providers.
Local and State Educational Agency	District 205	Participated in YHDP planning meetings.	Will market existing community resources to youth who are homeless and at risk of homelessness in the school system and will work on identifying more local support for this population.
Local and State Educational Agencies	North Cook Intermediate Service Center	Implement the Homeless Students Bill in the North region (2 year); coordinate with McKinney-Vento Liaisons for trainings and coordination with CoC-funded services; attends CoC north council meetings (10 years). Part of the YHDP lead team; participate in YHDP planning sessions and a co-lead of the YHDP education technical assistance.	A co-lead of the education technical assistance. Will organize a training for K-12 stakeholders on homelessness and community resources. Will assist with marketing youth resources to K-12 partners.
Local and State Educational Agencies	South Cook Intermediate Service Center	Coordinate with McKinney-Vento Liaisons for trainings and coordination with CoC-funded services. Participated in YHDP planning sessions.	Will participate in community training for K-12 stakeholders on youth homelessness. Will assist with marketing youth resources to K-12 partners.

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Partners	Name of Stakeholder	Description of Organization and Involvement	Commitment to Action
Local and State Educational Agencies	West 40 Intermediate Service Center	Coordinate with McKinney-Vento Liaisons for trainings and coordination with CoC-funded services. Part of the YHDP lead team; participate in YHDP planning sessions.	Will participate in community training for K-12 stakeholders on youth homelessness. Will assist with marketing youth resources to K-12 partners. Will create a system navigator position for West 40 schools and continue to meet with stakeholders to improve the response to youth homelessness in the region.
Runaway and Homeless Youth Providers	The Harbour	Provides shelter and transitional housing to female/female identifying and pregnant and parenting youth. Youth committee co-chair. Part of the YHDP lead team; participate in YHDP planning sessions.	Will support the implementation of the YHDP CCP and will ensure staff are trained to effectively serve TAY.
Runaway and Homeless Youth Providers	Youth & Opportunity United	Part of the YHDP lead team; participate in YHDP planning sessions.	Will support the implementation of the YHDP CCP and will ensure staff are trained to effectively serve TAY.
Non-Profit Youth Organization	African American Christian Foundation	Participated in YHDP planning sessions.	Will support implementation of the YHDP CCP by ensuring that staff serves TAY effectively. Will provide support services and connect homeless youths to shelters, housing, employers, job training and workforce programs.

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Partners	Name of Stakeholder	Description of Organization and Involvement	Commitment to Action
Non-Profit Youth Organization	Aunt Martha’s Health & Wellness	Part of the YHDP lead team; participate in YHDP planning sessions.	Will support the implementation of the YHDP CCP and will ensure staff are trained to effectively serve TAY.
Non-Profit Youth Organization	New Moms	Participated in YHDP planning sessions.	Will ensure staff are trained to effectively serve TAY.
Non-Profit Youth Organization	Shelter Inc.	Part of the YHDP lead team; participate in YHDP planning sessions.	Will support the implementation of the YHDP CCP and will ensure staff are trained to effectively serve TAY. Will explore utilizing foster families as host homes for minors who need crisis housing.
Non-Profit Youth Organization	Youth Crossroads	CCBYS agency (serving minors who have runaway or been locked out). Participated in YHDP planning sessions.	Will ensure staff are trained to effectively serve TAY.
Non-Profit Youth Organization (CCBYS)	Youth Outreach Services	CCBYS agency (serving minors who have runaway or been locked out). Part of the YHDP lead team; participate in YHDP planning sessions.	Will support the implementation of the YHDP CCP and will ensure staff are trained to effectively serve TAY.
Juvenile and Adult Corrections and Probation	Cook County Juvenile Probation and Court Services	Part of the YHDP lead team; participate in YHDP planning sessions. Provided data to help develop the CCP.	Will support the implementation of the YHDP CCP and will ensure staff are trained to effectively serve TAY.
Juvenile and Adult Corrections and Probation	Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice – Aftercare	Part of the YHDP lead team; participate in YHDP planning sessions. Provided data to help develop the CCP.	Will support the implementation of the YHDP CCP and will ensure staff are trained to effectively serve TAY.

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Partners	Name of Stakeholder	Description of Organization and Involvement	Commitment to Action
Juvenile and Adult Corrections and Probation	Moran Center for Youth Advocacy	Participated in YHDP planning sessions.	Will provide expungement and sealing services through their Help Desk at the Skokie Courthouse.
Health, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse Agencies	Kenneth Young Center	Provides comprehensive mental health support services to young people in the north/northwest suburbs; facilitates Communities for Positive Youth coalition implementing evidence-based substance use prevention, teen pregnancy and STI prevention, and a Youth Advisory Council. Part of the YHDP lead team; participate in YHDP planning sessions.	Will support the implementation of the YHDP CCP and will ensure staff are trained to effectively serve TAY.
WIOA Boards and Employment Agencies	Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership	Participated in YHDP planning sessions. Provided data to help inform the CCP. Recruited employment agencies to participate in focus groups.	Participate in YHDP planning sessions. Will provide transportation assistance to help youth who are homeless connect to employment. Will work with providers to develop formal partnerships to increase referrals to workforce development programs.
WIOA Boards and Employment Agencies	Youth Job Center	Participated in YHDP planning sessions.	Will ensure staff are trained to effectively serve TAY.
Landlords	<i>Pending</i>	<i>Pending</i>	<i>Pending</i>

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Partners	Name of Stakeholder	Description of Organization and Involvement	Commitment to Action
Public Housing Authorities	Housing Authority of Cook County	Sits on the Alliance Board of Directors (5+ years); provides vouchers for multiple projects (both CoC and non-CoC funded) throughout the community (10+ years); partners with the Alliance on the FLOW (moving on) program (4 years); partners with members of the CoC on a re- entry program to allow people discharged from the justice system to be added to their family's voucher (2 years); administers Family Unification Program to provide support for youth aging out of foster care. Participated in a YHDP planning meeting.	Will continue to implement the Family Unification Program and will seek additional FUP resources.
Institutions of Higher Education	Depaul USA	Part of the YHDP lead team; participate in YHDP planning sessions. A co-lead of the youth education TA.	Will support legislation to create a homeless liaison position in institutions of higher education and will support organizing a roundtable for institutions of higher education on youth homelessness.
Institutions of Higher Education	Harper College	Participated in YHDP planning sessions.	Will ensure staff are trained to effectively serve TAY.
Community Development Corporations	CEDA	Participated in YHDP planning sessions.	Will ensure staff are trained to effectively serve TAY.

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Partners	Name of Stakeholder	Description of Organization and Involvement	Commitment to Action
Community Development Corporation	Cornerstone Community Development Corporation	Provides PSH, RRH, outreach and prevention in South suburbs; sits on the Alliance Board (10 years). Is the CE lead for the south suburbs.	Will ensure staff are trained to effectively serve TAY.
Affordable Housing Developer	<i>Pending</i>	<i>Pending</i>	<i>Pending</i>
Local Advocacy, Research, and Philanthropic Organizations	Chicago Community Trust	Provided financial support to develop and implement the YHDP CCP, including supporting youth participation in the process.	Continue financial support to implement the YHDP CCP, including supporting youth participation in the process.
Local Advocacy, Research, and Philanthropic Organization	Chicago Coalition for the Homeless	A leader in youth and homeless advocacy. Drafted legislation that will be introduced this year.	Will lead the effort to pass legislation to create a liaison in institutions of higher education for youth who have experienced homelessness and/or have aged out of care and prioritize campus housing for this population. Will continue to lead a youth advocacy group.
Local Advocacy, Research, and Philanthropic Organization	Cuore e Mani Foundation	Provided financial support to support 100 Day Challenge and develop and implement the YHDP CCP, including supporting youth participation in the process.	
Local Advocacy, Research, and Philanthropic Organization	Pane e Pesci Fund/Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation	Provided financial support to support 100 Day Challenge and develop and implement the YHDP CCP, including supporting youth participation in the process.	

Suburban Cook County Community Plan to End Youth Homelessness, March 31, 2020

Partners	Name of Stakeholder	Description of Organization and Involvement	Commitment to Action
Local Advocacy, Research, and Philanthropic Organization	Heartland Alliance – Social Impact Research Center	Participated in YHDP planning sessions and conducted research with Youth Action Board members on youth involved in the justice and welfare system who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness.	Creating a youth-informed resource and will launch a website to better connect youth who are exiting the welfare and justice system to resources in the community.
Local Advocacy, Research, and Philanthropic Organization	VNA Foundation	Participated in YHDP planning sessions.	Provide financial support to on-going Alliance general operations.
Local Advocacy, Research, and Philanthropic Organization	Evanston Community Foundation	Provided financial support to implement a YAB in the northern suburbs.	

Appendix 2. Action Plan

GOAL 1: YOUTH-CENTERED AND YHDP PRINCIPLES			
YHDP principles and authentic youth engagement will be at the center of new projects and system change efforts.			
OBJECTIVES	ACTION STEPS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING
		TIMELINE	
Objective 1a. Youth voice and experience is at the center of assessing, planning and implementing all strategies and programming.	Identify a strategy for all projects, agencies, and system-level structures that serve youth to embed youth voice in their decision-making across the homeless services system	All YHDP Funded Projects Alliance Youth Committee DCFS CCBYS	YHDP Funded Project (Planning, Project 2 and Project 3)
		Q4 2020	
	Train YAB members on skills and content areas they identify to support meaningful engagement and involvement in youth system planning and evaluation	All YHDP Funded Projects Alliance YABs	YHDP Funded Project (Project 2)
		RFP/Project Review Spring 2020 On-going	
Develop and implement a long-term sustainability plan to support the work of the YABs. This includes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project-based YABs • Electing youth to agency boards • Project-based YAB budgets • Professional development • Other strategies to sustain youth voice in decision-making 	Alliance All YHDP Funded Projects YABs	YHDP Funded Project (Project 2 and Project 3)
		On-going	

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<p>Objective 1b. YHDP principles of equity, positive youth development, trauma-informed practices, housing first, family engagement, youth choice, individual and client-driven supports, and social and community integration are implemented on the project and system level.</p>	<p>Expand the existing training curriculum and integrate ongoing coaching for all homeless service providers that incorporates YHDP core principles and best practices for working with YYA. This includes expanding core trainings and creating a concrete assessment of fidelity to YHDP principles.</p>	<p>All YHDP Funded Projects All CoC Providers Alliance</p>	<p>YHDP Funded Project (Project 2)</p>
		<p>Year 2 of YHDP</p>	
	<p>Develop CQI measures that support the implementation of core principles</p>	<p>Alliance All YHDP Funded Projects Youth Committee YAB</p>	<p>Q4 2020</p>

GOAL 2: IDENTIFICATION & ACCESS			
Identify all youth and young adults experiencing and at-risk of homelessness as quickly as possible and connect them to resources.			
OBJECTIVES	ACTION STEPS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE
		TIMELINE	
<p>Objective 2a. All youth who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness know where to go and how to access services and supports.</p>	<p>Implement a youth-driven marketing campaign to better identify youth who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness.</p>	<p>YABs Youth service providers Education system Cook County Planning Department</p>	<p>Non-YHDP Funded Project</p>
		<p>On-going</p>	
	<p>Develop a standardized process to screen, identify, and track youth who are homeless and at-risk of homelessness who are involved with the child welfare, juvenile justice, education, and other systems and connect youth to appropriate services. Each system will have a designated liaison responsible for implementing the standardized process.</p>	<p>DCFS DJJ Workforce Higher Education McKinney-Vento</p>	<p>Non-YHDP Funded Project</p>
		<p>On-going</p>	
	<p>Create system navigator/outreach/diversion positions responsible for identifying and supporting YYA who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness and connecting them to CoC and community resources. Position will be responsive to needs of YYA (i.e. hours available, geography, etc.). Explore hiring priority for people with lived experience of homelessness.</p>	<p>New YHDP project (system navigators)</p>	<p>YHDP Funded Project (Project 2)</p>
		<p>Q4 2020</p>	

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Objective 2a. continued	<p>Ensure all existing youth access points (serving anyone 24 years old or younger) are streamlined, trained, and equipped to identify and connect youth who are homeless to services. This includes other youth-identified access points not listed with responsible parties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This includes communication from the county to ESG and CBDG recipients and measures to ensure accountability. 	<p>Entry Point Call Center IL CCBYS Hotline National Runaway Homeless Youth Call Center All suburban Cook emergency shelters All suburban Cook outreach All suburban Cook transitional housing All suburban schools All suburban police departments Youth employment agencies Cook County Planning Department</p>	Non-YHDP Funded Project
		On-going	
	<p>Pass IL state legislation creating a liaison position at institutions of higher education to more effectively identify and support youth who have experienced homelessness and/or been involved in the child welfare system and prioritize campus housing during the school year and breaks.</p>	<p>Alliance Advocacy and Development Coordinator Chicago Coalition for the Homeless Youth Committee Advocacy Committee</p>	Non-YHDP Funded Project
		<p>2020 Legislative Calendar (February – June 2020)</p>	

Suburban Cook County Community Plan to End Youth Homelessness, March 31, 2020

Objective 2a. continued	Create other youth-specific access points across the county, including, but not limited to rotating drop-in spaces (i.e. libraries, colleges, other accessible locations for youth).	New YHDP project (system navigators) Q4 2020	YHDP Funded Project (Project 2)
	Support the content creation and dissemination of the youth-led Social Impact resource to assist young adults exiting the welfare or juvenile justice system	Social Impact South YAB Youth providers DCFS DJJ Q3 2020	Non-YHDP Funded Project
	Expand existing Point in Time Count strategies to more intentionally include youth-specific community stakeholders in outreach blitzes and Service Site Surveys.	Alliance Alliance Outreach Team Q1 2021	Non-YHDP Funded Project
Objective 2b. All youth who are homeless are tracked on an “active list” across systems.	Develop protocols including data sharing agreements, location and security, privacy, etc. for including youth on the list and identify partners to participate. Explore cross-system case conferencing as part of the new data sharing agreements.	HMIS DCFS DJJ Workforce Education New YHDP HMIS staff On-going	YHDP Funded Project (Project 1)

GOAL 3: PREVENTION & DIVERSION			
When youth and young adults present or are identified as experiencing or at risk of homelessness, service providers prevent homelessness or divert them to safe and stable housing whenever possible.			
OBJECTIVES	ACTION STEPS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING
		TIMELINE	
Objective 3a. Develop a process, protocol, staffing, and flexible resources to divert or rapidly exit youth entering the homeless system.	Train all access points and youth providers (shelter, transitional housing, outreach, Coordinated Entry access points) to implement diversion/rapid exit best practices	New YHDP project (system navigators) All access points All youth providers	YHDP Funded Project (Project 2)
		On-going	
	Create system diversion/navigator positions in each region to provide staffing and flexible funding to divert and rapidly exit youth	New YHDP project (system navigators) West 40 Intermediate Service Center	YHDP Funded Project (Project 2)
		Q3 2020	

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Objective 3b. Implement new strategies to ensure youth exiting and involved with the foster care system do not become homeless.	Provide DCFS-funded supportive services until age 23 for any suburban Cook County youth that has become homeless since aging out and has a housing subsidy (i.e. FUP and YHDP-funded housing projects)	DCFS	Non-YHDP Funded Project
		On-going	
	Identify and test a tool (i.e. youth connections scale) to increase positive connections that could serve as housing placements for suburban Cook County youth aging out of care served by the Youth Housing Assistance Program.	DCFS	Non-YHDP Funded Project
		On-going	
	Test and evaluate the Lifeset model of serving TAY for positive outcomes, including decreases in housing instability and homelessness after program exit.	DCFS	Non-YHDP Funded Project
		On-going	
	Market Youth Alumni Centers and other DCFS and CoC supports to youth exiting care and cross-train DCFS and CoC partners to improve referrals between systems.	DCFS Alliance	Non-YHDP Funded Project
		On-going	
	Conduct age appropriate transition planning for youth. Start countdown to 21 transition planning meetings at ages 19 and 20	DCFS	Non-YHDP Funded Project
		On-going	

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Objective 3b. continued	Explore additional resources to allow housing advocates to engage DCFS youth while they are incarcerated.	DCFS Alliance	Non-YHDP Funded Project
		On-going	
	Seek funding to pilot providing suburban Cook youth who age out of care and do not receive FUP 12 months of aftercare services after turning 21.	DCFS	Non-YHDP Funded Project
		On-going	
	Conduct regular cross-sector meetings to discuss strategies to prevent youth homelessness and monitor progress on action steps in the plan.	DCFS DJJ Alliance	Non-YHDP Funded Project
		Beginning 2020 Q3 with new YHDP projects	
Seek additional funding to hire a DCFS FUP liaison to manage and monitor the 1,678 FUP vouchers in the State of IL to ensure efficient and effective utilization of the program.	DCFS	Non-YHDP Funded Project	
	On-going		
The Kinship Navigator will work with CCBYS providers to establish protocol to consider alternate placements with family and friends for minors that have runaway or have been locked out.	DCFS CCBYS	Non-YHDP Funded Project	
	On-going		
Objective 3c. Implement new strategies to ensure youth exiting and involved with the juvenile justice system do not become homeless.	Examples could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate transition planning within DJJ 	DJJ	Non-YHDP Funded Project
		On-going	

Suburban Cook County Community Plan to End Youth Homelessness, March 31, 2020

<p>Objective 3d. Strengthen connections between community resources and K-12 stakeholders to more effectively identify and connect youth to McKinney-Vento resources, family reunification resources like Comprehensive Community Based Youth Services (CCBYS), Continuum of Care resources, the Homeless Students' Bill (HB261) prevention resources, and other wraparound services available from Intermediate Service Centers.</p>	<p>Incorporate CCBYS, CoC, and the Homeless Students' Bill in existing McKinney-Vento liaison training. This includes making online Coordinated Entry training available to school staff.</p>	<p>Intermediate Service Centers Regional McKinney-Vento Liaisons Alliance On-going</p>	<p>Non-YHDP Funded Project</p>
	<p>Host trainings and meet and greets between schools and community resource partners, starting with the 7 districts with the highest number of unaccompanied youth.</p>	<p>Intermediate Service Centers Regional McKinney-Vento Liaisons Beginning summer 2020</p>	<p>Non-YHDP Funded Project</p>

GOAL 4: IMMEDIATE ACCESS TO LOW-BARRIER CRISIS HOUSING			
If prevention and diversion are not possible, provide immediate access to low-barrier crisis or short-term housing and services to all youth and young adults who need and want them.			
OBJECTIVES	ACTION STEPS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING
		TIMELINE	
Objective 4a. Expand crisis housing options for youth and young adults under 18 AND under 25.	Develop TH/RRH Joint Projects for youth ages 18 to 24	Existing youth TH and RRH providers	YHDP Funded Project (Project 3)
		New YHDP funded projects	
		Q4 2020	
	Explore resources for permanent youth-specific shelter or crisis housing (hotel/motel) options for youth ages 18 to 24 and minors.	Cook County Planning Department Alliance	Non-YHDP Funded Project
		On-going	
	Explore suburban shelter and transitional housing options for minors (i.e. host homes or new TH). This includes exploring recruitment for host homes from foster families who currently do not have a foster child staying with them. This also includes exploring IL legislative advocacy to reduce barriers to becoming a host home.	CCBYS providers	Non-YHDP Funded Project
DCFS			
	On-going		

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<p>Objective 4b. Develop a process and protocol to ensure that all adult shelters and non-CoC youth TH beds are fully utilized and equipped to serve youth.</p>	<p>All YYA who need and want crisis housing will be connected to a bed. This includes a no turnaway policy for TAY supported by a 24/7 alert system to guarantee a shelter bed somewhere across the CoC.</p>	<p>Adult shelters Youth TH and shelter providers</p>	<p>Non-YHDP Funded Project</p>
		<p>As soon as possible</p>	
<p>Objective 4c. Develop alternative methods for youth to identify and access shelter and crisis housing through the Coordinated Entry system.</p>	<p>Transportation assistance for youth and young adults to get to shelter locations.</p>	<p>New YHDP system project (system navigators)</p>	<p>YHDP Funded Project (Project 2 and Project 3)</p>
		<p>2020 Q3</p>	
	<p>Flexible funding and case management to cover rent and other short-term expenses to divert youth and young adults from needing crisis housing.</p>	<p>New YHDP system project (system navigators)</p>	<p>YHDP Funded Project (Project 2 and Project 3)</p>
		<p>2020 Q3</p>	
	<p>Develop web or app-based access points. This includes stronger collaboration with the existing StreetLight app.</p>	<p>New YHDP system project (system navigators) Chicago Coalition for the Homeless Youth agencies already participating in StreetLight</p>	<p>Non-YHDP Funded Project</p>
		<p>As soon as possible</p>	

GOAL 5: ACCESS TO LONGER-TERM HOUSING & SERVICES			
Providers link all youth experiencing homelessness to longer term housing and services that help achieve the USICH core outcomes of stable housing, permanent connections, education and employment, and improved well-being.			
OBJECTIVES	ACTION STEPS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING
		TIMELINE	
Objective 5a. Create new housing projects.	Develop TH/RRH Joint Projects for youth ages 18 to 24. The role of housing specialist is a required and defined service of every new permanent housing project.	New YHDP funded projects	YHDP Funded Project (Project 3)
		Q4 2020	
	Develop a mechanism to ensure existing PSH providers can provide beds to serve TAY in need of that intervention, especially TAY with severe mental illness	Existing CoC PSH providers	Non-YHDP Funded Project
		On-going, based on need	
	TH/RRH projects will provide 18 months of case management services to FUP eligible youth 23 and older when DCFS cannot fund services.	DCFS New YHDP Funded Projects	YHDP Funded Project (Project 3)
		2020 Q3	
	DCFS will support local PHA applications for FUP and Foster Youth to Independence Vouchers	DCFS Public Housing Authorities	Non-YHDP Funded Project
		On-going	

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<p>Objective 5b. Develop and implement a comprehensive landlord engagement strategy.</p>	<p>Explore resources for systemwide landlord mitigation incentives. This includes covering in damage to an apartment and covering double security deposits, if required by landlord</p>	<p>Alliance Cook County Planning Department</p>	<p>Non-YHDP Funded Project</p>
		<p>Conversations beginning 2020 Q2</p>	
	<p>Explore resources to develop the infrastructure to coordinate landlord engagement and recruitment (i.e. shared database of landlords, consistent marketing materials, training for housing specialists, staffing to support coordinated landlord engagement, etc.)</p>	<p>Alliance Cook County Planning Department</p>	<p>Non-YHDP Funded Project</p>
		<p>Conversations beginning 2020 Q2</p>	
<p>Objective 5c. Providers across systems will develop new models to increase and track positive and lasting connections between YYA and trusted adults, peers, community, and other social supports.</p>	<p>Providers <i>across systems</i> will adopt an assessment tool like the Youth Connections Scale to assess, track, and set service plan goals to increase positive connections</p>	<p>All YHDP Funded Projects DCFS Alliance</p>	<p>Non-YHDP Funded Project</p>
		<p>On-going</p>	
	<p>Pilot a peer mentoring program and foster opportunities for YYA to make authentic connections. This includes creating space and opportunities for YYA to gather amongst themselves in a less formalized way (i.e. YAB suggestion for “meet-ups”)</p>	<p>Alliance YABS All YHDP Funded Projects</p>	<p>Non-YHDP Funded Project</p>
		<p>Year 2 YHDP</p>	

Suburban Cook County Community Plan to End Youth Homelessness, March 31, 2020

<p>Objective 5d. Develop a comprehensive strategy to connect YYA to meaningful and sustainable employment and training opportunities</p>	<p>Create formal partnerships/MOUs between WIOA-funded and Opportunity Works programs and new and existing youth housing/shelter programs to assess all youth for those programs and make direct referrals</p>	<p>Alliance Workforce Development WIOA-funded programs</p>	<p>Non-YHDP Funded Project</p>
		<p>On-going</p>	
	<p>Youth providers hire youth and/or create youth fellowship/internship opportunities to provide job experience. New projects will be incentivized to incorporate this into the program model. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiring YYA as advocates, spokespersons, trainers, and consultants. • Providing stipends for YYA to do peer outreach • Hiring YYA to help with execution of new programs, including but not limited to on-site mentors and activity planners • Prioritizing lived experience as a qualification for new system navigator positions 	<p>All YHDP Funded Projects YABs</p>	<p>YHDP Funded Project (Project 2 and Project 3)</p>
		<p>Hiring for new projects beginning 2020 Q3</p>	
<p>Objective 5e. Innovate new models to support YYA that enroll in higher education and increase the number of youth who enroll</p>	<p>Host a roundtable on homelessness for institutions of higher education to discuss strategies to better identify and support youth who are currently homeless, have experienced homelessness, or aged out of care</p>	<p>Alliance YHDP Education TA Higher Education partners</p>	<p>Non-YHDP Funded Project</p>
		<p>2020 Q2</p>	

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Objective 5e. continued	Provide support to increase graduation rates for students who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness.	Intermediate Service Centers Alliance	Non-YHDP Funded Project
		On-going	
	Seek ways to Increase the number of TAY from foster care who enroll in college	DCFS	Non-YHDP Funded Project
		On-going	
Objective 5f. Develop a plan to improve connections that improve YYA overall well-being, including health, mental health, and substance use treatment.	Seek ways to ensure all YYA are enrolled in health insurance and connected to MCO care coordinators (if eligible).	YHDP Funded Projects Youth providers Adult providers who serve TAY/DCFS	YHDP Funded Project (Project 3)
		2020 Q3	
	Incorporate activities within TH/RRH that support physical fitness and mental health.	YHDP Funded Projects	YHDP Funded Project (Project 3)
		2020 Q3	
Objective 5g. Develop a plan to guarantee transportation (to shelter/service providers, work, school, appointments, shopping, and other places that support social connections)	New projects to include transportation funding for YYA in program budgets. This includes passes for CTA, PACE and Metra and Uber/Lyft credits.	YHDP Funded Projects	YHDP Funded Project (Project 3)
		2020 Q3	

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Objective 5g. continued	Apply for nonprofit Uber and Lyft vouchers to support the YAB and youth housing programs	Alliance Resource Development	Non-YHDP Funded Projects
		Applied 2020 Q1	
Objective 5h. All service providers across systems are trained and equipped to meet the needs of pregnant and parenting YYA. This includes meeting the needs of pregnant and parenting YYA of all genders.	Cross-system conference for Head Start, childcare, child welfare, and homeless service providers to educate providers about other systems and strengthen relationships	Alliance Ounce of Prevention DCFS	Non-YHDP Funded Projects
		April 2020	
	Raise awareness among childcare and Head Start providers about resources for homeless families, including childcare subsidies	Alliance Ounce of Prevention	Non-YHDP Funded Projects
		April 2020	
Objective 5i. All service providers equipped to identify and serve survivors of human trafficking, sexual exploitation, and domestic violence	All service providers trained on best practices	Alliance Training and Engagement Coordinator	Non-YHDP Funded Project
		On-going	
	Regional providers and systems (i.e. diversion court) that serve survivors of human trafficking, sexual exploitation, and domestic violence trained in the process to refer eligible clients to CoC housing resources and support	Alliance Training and Engagement Coordinator Legal System DCFS Human Trafficking Director	Non-YHDP Funded Project
		On-going	

GOAL 6: ADVOCACY & RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT			
Advocate for the funding and policy changes needed to more effectively prevent and end youth homelessness.			
OBJECTIVES	ACTION STEPS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING
		TIMELINE	
Objective 6a. Identify and advocate for legislative changes at the local and state level that will contribute to ending youth homelessness	Participate in the CCH youth working group to identify and advocate for budget and policy priorities to more effectively end youth homelessness.	Alliance Advocacy and Development Coordinator	Non-YHDP Funded Project
		2020 Q1	
	Complete a review of other states’ legislative advocacy efforts and develop a comprehensive strategy for legislative advocacy priorities to end youth homelessness in Illinois.	Alliance Advocacy and Development Coordinator	Non-YHDP Funded Project
		2020 Q3	
Support HB2983, legislation that requires the Governor’s Cabinet to create a strategic vision for preventing homelessness among youth leaving State systems of care.	Alliance Advocacy and Development Coordinator Chicago Coalition for the Homeless DCFS	Non-YHDP Funded Project	
	2020 Q2		
Partner with and support on-going advocacy initiatives/organizations that contribute to ending youth homelessness.	Alliance AllChicago ICOY Chicago Coalition for the Homeless Cook County Planning Department	Non-YHDP Funded Project	
	On-going		

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<p>Objective 6b. Develop a fundraising plan to support the implementation of the Coordinated Community Plan.</p>	<p>Convene a funders’ working group to help support the implementation of the CCP. This includes identifying sources for match dollars.</p>	<p>Alliance Advocacy and Development Coordinator 2020 Q2</p>	<p>Non-YHDP Funded Project</p>
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GOAL 7: CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT			
We will continually evaluate the effectiveness of community efforts to prevent and end youth homelessness.			
OBJECTIVES	ACTION STEPS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING
		TIMELINE	
Objective 7a. Ensure that strategic planning and implementation are data-driven, regularly evaluate implementation to ensure that the system is responsive to youth needs, accountable to strategic efforts, and effective in supporting achievement of intended outcomes.	Define metrics for program-level and system-level outcomes and performance	All YHDP funded projects Alliance/HMIS	YHDP Funded Project (Project 1, Project 2, and Project 3)
		Q3 2020	
	Produce data quality and performance reports for projects and youth-system as a whole	All YHDP funded projects Alliance/HMIS	YHDP Funded Project (Project 1, Project 2, and Project 3)
		YHDP Year 1	
	Develop CoC and YAB review process to support continuous evaluation of youth-serving projects and the system as a whole – assess for effectiveness, accessibility, and equity. This includes ways for YYA to be involved in CQI in partnership with staff and YYA evaluation of programs with someone from outside of the agency.	YABs	YHDP Funded Project (Project 1, Project 2, and Project 3)
		YHDP Funded Projects Alliance	
	YHDP Year 1		

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<p>Objective 7a. continued</p>	<p>Ensure that all youth who come into contact with the youth homeless services system have opportunities to provide feedback on their experiences at each phase of their process</p>	<p>Alliance YABs YHDP Funded Projects</p> <hr/> <p>On-going</p>	<p>YHDP Funded Project (Project 1, Project 2, and Project 3)</p>
<p>Objective 7b. Develop a comprehensive youth homelessness system that ensures equity in access, experiences while seeking and receiving services, and outcomes for all YYA across the CoC's geographic region.</p>	<p>Equity assessment: Assess for geographic, racial, LGBTQ+, gender and any other identity-based inequity at the system and provider levels that accounts for intersectionality and develop a plan to ensure accountability in addressing inequity.</p>	<p>Alliance YHDP Funded Projects New system YHDP project (system navigators) YABs</p> <hr/> <p>On-going</p>	<p>Non-YHDP Funded Project</p>
	<p>Address racial equity: Assess system- and project-level racial disparities for clients based on access and outcomes data, as well as on participants' experiences with programs and the system as a whole. Develop a plan to eliminate racial bias in service provision and system function. Ensure all providers and system are accountable to this plan.</p>	<p>Alliance YHDP Funded Projects New system YHDP project (system navigators) YABs</p> <hr/> <p>On-going</p>	<p>Non-YHDP Funded Project</p>

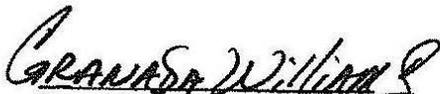
Suburban Cook County Community Plan to End Youth Homelessness, March 31, 2020

Objective 7b. continued	<p>Improve LGBTQ+ equity: Assess where LGBTQIA+ YYA do and don't feel safe across the CoC's programs. Develop a strategy to establish places that LGBTQ+ youth and young adults can access immediately and feel safe (i.e., that are not gender-segregated, that include private rooms and bathrooms, etc.). Ensure all homeless service providers are trained to provide safe and supportive services to LGBTQIA+ YYA and are held accountable for doing this.</p>	<p>Alliance YHDP Funded Projects New system YHDP project (system navigators) YABs</p>	Non-YHDP Funded Project	
		<p>On-going</p>		
	<p>(Dis)ability equity: Assess system- and project-level disparities in outcomes and access for people with physical, emotional/mental, intellectual, and other disabilities to identify gaps. Develop a strategy to ensure equitable access for all people regardless of ability level, and ensure project- and system-level accountability with this strategy.</p>	<p>Alliance YHDP Funded Projects New system YHDP project (system navigators) YABs</p>		Non-YHDP Funded Project
		<p>On-going</p>		

Appendix 3. Signature Pages from Official YHDP Representatives

Continuum of Care Board Signature Page

The signature below attests to the approval and support for the suburban Cook County Coordinated Community Plan to End Youth Homelessness. We agree to work collaboratively with our partners to implement a comprehensive system to prevent and end youth homelessness, including the goals and objectives outlined in the plan.

Name (Print): 
Granada Williams - Printed Name

Title: Board Chair

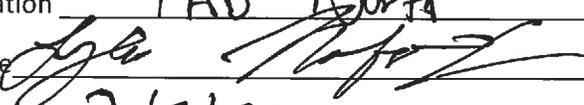
Organization: Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County

Signature: 
Board Chair (Signature)

Date: 3/27/2020

Youth Action Board Signature Page

The signature below attests to the approval and support for the suburban Cook County Coordinated Community Plan to End Youth Homelessness. We agree to work collaboratively with our partners to implement a comprehensive system to prevent and end youth homelessness, including the goals and objectives outlined in the plan.

Name (Print) Tylor Norfolk
Title VAB
Organization VAB North
Signature 
Date 3/5/20

Name (Print) Denise Morales
Title VAB
Organization VAB North
Signature Denise Morales
Date 3/5/2020

Name (Print) Isaiah Humphreys
Title VAB
Organization VAB North
Signature Isaiah Humphreys
Date 8/5/2020

Name (Print) Jordyn Khatatbeh
Title VAB North
Organization VAB North
Signature Jordyn Khatatbeh
Date 3/5/2020

Youth Action Board Signature Page

The signature below attests to the approval and support for the suburban Cook County Coordinated Community Plan to End Youth Homelessness. We agree to work collaboratively with our partners to implement a comprehensive system to prevent and end youth homelessness, including the goals and objectives outlined in the plan.

Name (Print) Sean Smith
Title YAB
Organization _____
Signature Sean Smith
Date 3/12/2020

Name (Print) Taj Reana Reed
Title CO-chair Y.A.B
Organization Aunt Martha's
Signature Taj Reed
Date 3/12/20

Name (Print) Kavare ASUP
Title YAB
Organization Aunt Martha's
Signature Kavare ASUP
Date 3-12-2020

Name (Print) Antonio Wallace
Title YAB
Organization Aunts Marthas
Signature Antonio Wallace
Date 3-12-2020

Name (Print) TREVON WILLIAMS

Title YAB

Organization AUNT MARTAS

Signature J. Williams

Date 03/12/20

Name (Print) Cornelius Blaine More

Title YAB

Organization Aunt MARTAS

Signature C. Blaine More

Date 3/12/2020

Name (Print) _____

Title _____

Organization _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Name (Print) _____

Title _____

Organization _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Name (Print) _____

Title _____

Organization _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Local Government Agency Signature Page

The signature below attests to the approval and support for the suburban Cook County Coordinated Community Plan to End Youth Homelessness. We agree to work collaboratively with our partners to implement a comprehensive system to prevent and end youth homelessness, including the goals and objectives outlined in the plan.

Name (Print) Dominic A. Tocci

Title Deputy Director

Organization Cook County Department of Planning and Development

Signature 

Date 3/27/2020

Public Child Welfare Agency Signature Page

The signature below attests to the approval and support for the suburban Cook County Coordinated Community Plan to End Youth Homelessness. We agree to work collaboratively with our partners to implement a comprehensive system to prevent and end youth homelessness, including the goals and objectives outlined in the plan.

Name (Print) Marc D. Smith

Title Acting Director

Organization Jl. Dept.

Signature 

Date 3/26/20

Appendix 4. Youth System Map

Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County

CULTIVATING SYSTEMS TO PREVENT AND END YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

RADIATING PRINCIPLES

DATA DRIVEN

TAY AND LGBTQ COMPETENCY

HOUSING FIRST

TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

SYSTEM COLLABORATION

EQUITY

AUTHENTIC YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

CLOUDED BY STIGMA, NEED FOR MORE YOUTH APPROPRIATE OUTREACH, MORE SYSTEMS COLLABORATION, AND LGBTQ SERVICES

- IDENTIFICATION AND OUTREACH**
- CoC Coordinated Entry Access Points
 - 11 - 17 Youth Providers
 - Youth and Adult Drop-In Services
 - Outreach Workers
 - School Districts
 - McKinney-Vento Liaisons
 - Child Welfare
 - Juvenile Justice
 - Community Partners

- Permanent connections
- Stable housing
- Education and employment
- Improved social and emotional well-being
- Authentic engagement in CoC planning efforts



TAY

Market rent housing

Permanent supportive housing

Rapid re-housing



TAY

Transitional housing

Emergency shelter



TAY



TAY

- Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Diversion
- CCBYS Reunification Services
- HB251: Homeless Students Bill
- Coordinated Entry Call Line



SAFE AND STABLE HOUSING

CRISIS AND INTERIM HOUSING

PREVENT AND DIVERT

Appendix 5. Overview of YHDP Planning Process and Timeline in Suburban Cook County

September 2019	YHDP Grant Award
October 2019	Community Kick-off Event Convene Youth Leadership Team, weekly meetings (ongoing) Convene Youth Action Boards, monthly meetings (ongoing)
November 2019	Conduct Seven Focus Groups including: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Minors (Youth under age 18)2. Young Adults age 18-243. Pregnant and Parenting Youth4. Youth Involved with Child Welfare, Juvenile Justice, or Both5. LGBTQ+ Youth6. Survivors of Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking7. Workforce and Higher Education Implement Stakeholder Surveys Electronically* Conduct Youth Interviews* Conduct Stakeholder interviews
December 2019	Community Convening, review focus group results and draft action plan Conduct System Modeling (18-24 year olds)*
January 2020	Conduct System Modeling (under 18)*
February 2020	Determine YHDP funded projects
March 2020	Finalize Coordinated Community Plan

Anticipated Timeline and Activities

April 2020	Begin RFP process
May and June 2020	Select YHDP providers
July 2020	Complete e-snaps Project Applications
September 2020	Begin YHDP Implementation

*Additional information/tool available in the Appendix

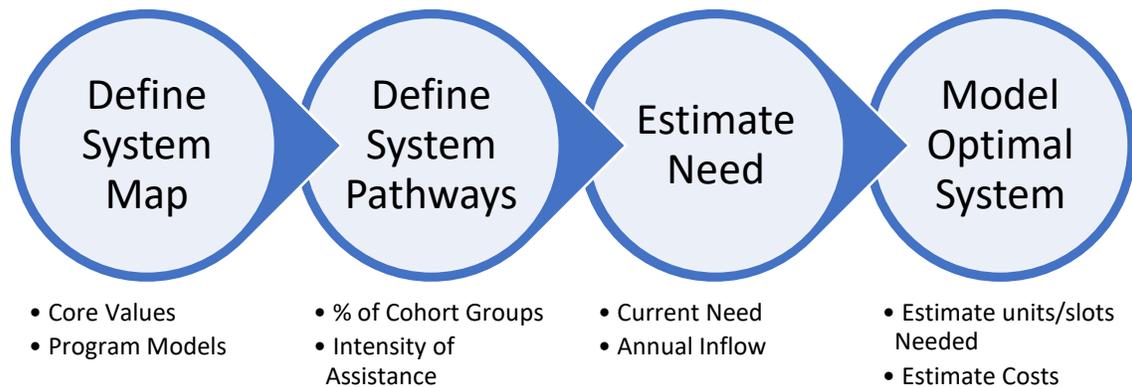
Appendix 6. System Modeling

System Modeling Process

To develop our system model, we convened stakeholders who work with unaccompanied and parenting youth 18 to 24 four times to arrive at consensus around our best estimates of how many young people will need specific combinations of resources each year and how much those resources will cost to provide in adherence with our vision, values, and principles. We met once to discuss youth under 18 and determined that, because of state-level policies requiring that the child welfare system house that youth under 18, we would build in adequate supports at the front end of the system to support the under-18 population through navigation, outreach, and diversion, but we would not model the rest of the system to serve that population.

To arrive at our 18- to 24-year-old system model, we started by defining a system map that included all resources our ideal system would include to serve youth and young adults, then we estimated what proportion of youth and young adults would likely move through each pathway or combination of resources in a fully built out system. Using current data on annual inflow of youth and young adults and our best estimates of costs to build out these components, we arrived at consensus around what our optimal system would look like and the gaps between what we currently have and what we still need.

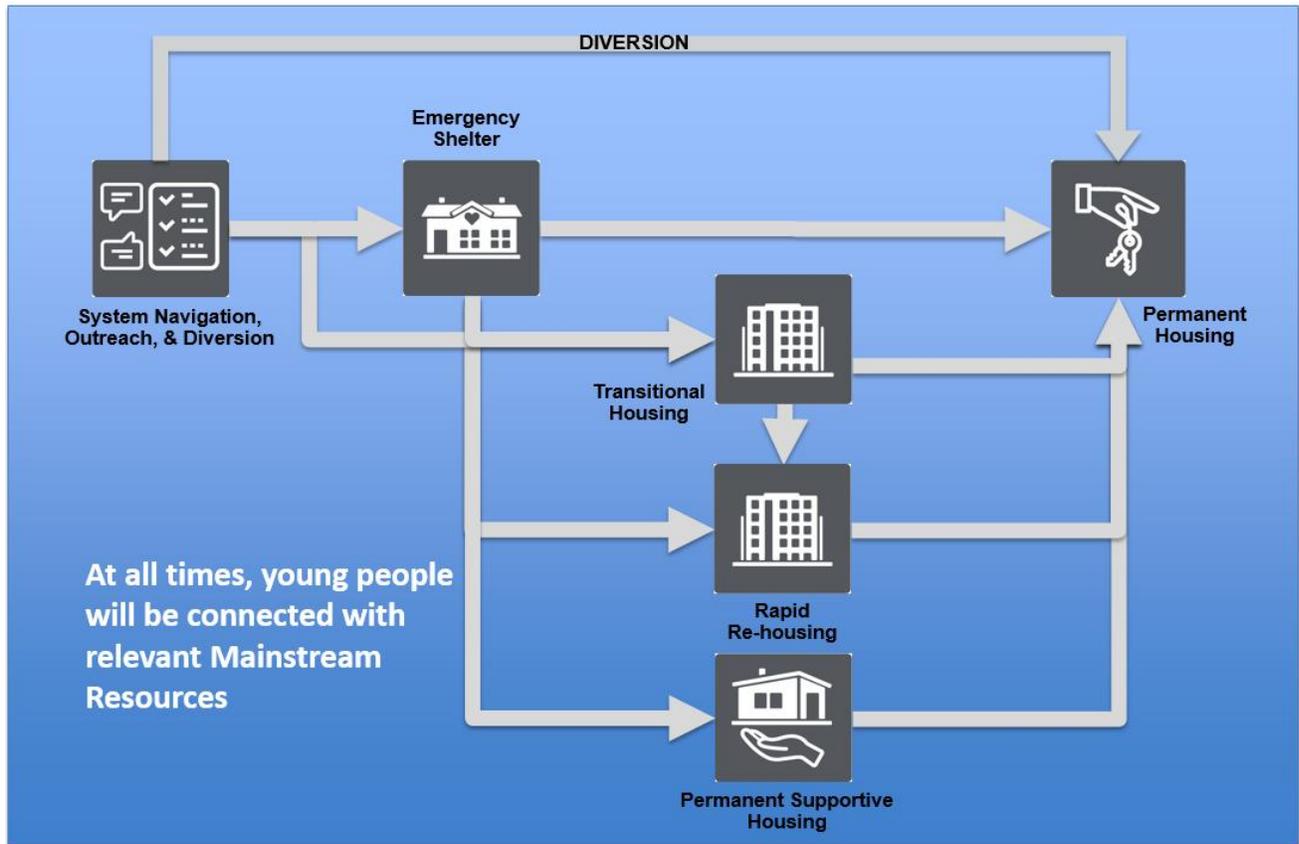
Figure 7. System Modeling Process



System Map

Stakeholders identified the following key project types and resources to comprise the full youth homelessness services system.

Figure 8. System Map (blue background represents mainstream resources)



System Pathways

Based on recent data of youth and young adults who make contact with the homeless services system, we estimate that 434 unaccompanied youth (UY) households and 62 parenting youth (PY) households will present annually. Because our system is not legally permitted to serve youth under 18 long-term, this system model only accounts for the 18- to 24-year-old population. See Table 6 for summary of pathway assumptions.

Table 6. System Modeling Assumptions By Pathway						
Cohorts and Associated Service Strategies (Pathways)	Estimated % of UY and PY 18-24 per Pathway	Average Length of Time per Project Type				
		Diversion (# weeks)	ES (# weeks)	TH (# months)	RRH (# months)	PSH (# years)
Navigation, Outreach, & Diversion Only	8% ⁴⁹	3				
ES Only	7%		3			
TH Only	9%			10		
ES + TH	10%		2	10		
ES + RRH	14%		4		14	
TH + RRH	22%			8	10	
ES + TH + RRH	27%		2	12	18	
ES + PSH	3%		5			3

System Capacity, Gaps, and Costs

Based on pathway assumptions, inflow data, and cost estimates, we anticipate the following costs to fund our full youth system, and we have identified the following gaps in project types.

Table 7: Estimated Capacity, Gaps, and Costs			
Component	Estimated Cost (including existing capacity)	Total # "slots" needed	Current "slots"
Youth System Navigation, Outreach, & Diversion	\$605,000 ⁵⁰	N/A	N/A
ES	\$155,995	17	16
TH	\$3,718,000	286	50
RRH	\$5,595,000	373	10
PSH	\$212,053	15	0
TOTAL	\$9,681,048		

⁴⁹ See Project 2 for more information on need for System Navigation, Outreach, and Diversion.

⁵⁰ This number is derived from the Alliance’s calculation, assuming that this function is geographically equitable and that all people moving through the system access it at some point.

Appendix 7. Key Youth Informant Interview Questions

1. Are you currently in or have you recently experienced unstable housing? (Homelessness, couch surfing, staying outside, staying in places not meant for housing, etc.)
2. How would you currently define your housing situation?
 - a. How would you describe the place you sleep most nights?
 - b. Do you feel safe where you stay?
 - c. Do you think you'll stay there awhile? Why or why not?
3. Tell me about past housing situations that led to unstable housing? (turned 18, an event, left for safety, kicked out, left justice system or foster care, etc.)
 - a. How old were you?
 - b. Where were you living at that time?
 - c. Was there something that could have prevented your situation? (negotiating with a landlord, catching up on rent, repairing relationships with family or friends, etc.)
4. Where did you first go to find resources?
 - a. Did you ask a friend/ family member?
 - b. Did you ask a teacher/social worker/counselor?
 - c. What organizations/resources did you already know about?
 - d. Did you look up resources online?
 - i. What online resources did you find?
 - e. Did you go to a walk-in center?
 - i. How did you find the walk in center?
5. In general, what types of resources or supports did you need at that time? What did you envision that your transition into independence would look like, or what did you want it to look like?
6. What types of resources or supports did you receive?
 - a. What resources or supports were missing?
 - b. Why do you think these resources of supports are missing?
7. What was helpful?
 - a. Is there one person that stands out as helpful? Why were they helpful? What about them was helpful?
 - b. Is there one service that stands out as very helpful? Why was it helpful? What about it was helpful?
8. What could have been better? If you could make a change in the process what would it be?
 - a. Are there people that you wish had been there? Why?
 - b. Are there services that could have been improved?
 - c. What would you like case managers, teachers, social workers or other adults who you've worked to know so they could have provided better help?
9. What would you like to know from case managers, teachers, social workers or other adults whose job it is to provide help? (we will be interviewing them as well)
10. What have been some barriers you have faced to being housed (struggling to make ends meet, having a criminal record, feeling worn out and stressed, conflict with friend or family, etc.)?
11. What opportunities for success became available to you after being housed?

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12. If you were to use a website or an app, what would make it appealing?
 - a. What would need to be in there?
 - b. What is the best way to get it in the hands of youth?
 - c. What would make YOU/THEM use it?
 - d. What would you call it?
 - e. What other ways would you use to share information?
13. If you could do anything to prevent and end youth homelessness what would it be?
14. If you were able, would you like to be involved in future efforts to end youth homelessness?
 - a. Serve on Youth Action Board
 - b. Attend YAB or CoC meetings
 - c. Advise outreach team
 - d. Create social media/outreach art
15. What are barriers to being involved in meetings, discussions and decision-making processes around ending and preventing youth homelessness? What would be your incentive to participate in the decision-making process?
16. Is there anything else you would like to add?

We want to ensure that we have a broad representation of youth across suburban Cook County, so we are asking all youth we interview the following questions:

What is your current gender identity? (Check all that apply)

- Male/Man
- Female/Woman
- TransMale/transman
- TransFemale/transwoman
- Genderqueer/gender non-conforming (GNC)
- Another identity (please state): _____
- Decline to answer

Which categories best describe you?

- White
- Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin
- Black or African American
- Asian
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Middle Eastern or North African
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- Some other race, ethnicity, or origin
- Decline to answer

How old are you? _____

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Please mark yes or no (or maybe) if you identify with each of the statements below.

1. I identify as LGBTQ and/or gender non-conforming
 YES NO MAYBE I'D PREFER NOT TO SAY

2. I do currently or have in the past struggled with substance use or addiction [*I have struggled with alcohol or drugs to the point that it resulted in health problems, disability, and/or challenges to meet major responsibilities at work, school, or home*]
 YES NO MAYBE I'D PREFER NOT TO SAY

3. I do currently or have in the past had a mental health issue [*I have struggled with a mental/behavioral health issue to the point that it substantially interferes with or limits one or more major life activities*]
 YES NO MAYBE I'D PREFER NOT TO SAY

Appendix 8. Stakeholder Survey Tool

1. Please select the option or options that best describes your role as a community partner (check all that apply)
 - a. Homeless service provider for young adults (18-24)
 - b. Service provider for youth (under 18)
 - c. Service provider for adults (age 18+)
 - d. Child welfare provider (DCFS)
 - e. Juvenile justice provider
 - f. Adult justice provider (18+)
 - g. Employment program provider
 - h. Educational provider
 - i. Child care provider
 - j. Mental health provider
 - k. Medical provider
 - l. Substance use provider
 - m. Legal system/law enforcement representative
 - n. Policy maker/government representative
 - o. Affordable housing provider (landlord or developer)
 - p. Research/advocacy organization
 - q. Community member
 - r. Other
2. What area of suburban Cook County do you represent? (check all that apply)
 - a. North Suburban Cook
 - b. West Suburban Cook
 - c. South Suburban Cook
3. On a scale of 1 – 5 (5 being very familiar), how familiar are you with youth and young adult homelessness services and homeless prevention resources in suburban Cook County?
4. Please select what you feel are the top 3 contributing factors to youth homelessness (please select only 3)
 - a. Youth poverty
 - b. Childhood abuse and neglect
 - c. Youth substance use disorders
 - d. Family substance use disorders
 - e. Not completing high school
 - f. Youth pregnancy
 - g. LGBTQIA+ issues
 - h. Involvement with the justice system
 - i. Involvement with the child welfare system
 - j. Youth mental health issues
 - k. Family mental health issues
 - l. Human trafficking and sexual exploitation
 - m. Domestic Violence
 - n. Lack of affordable and accessible housing
 - o. Lack of basic life skills
 - p. Other

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5. What do you think is working best in your community to help young adults who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness avoid homelessness or end their homelessness? Why is it working (be specific as possible)?
6. Where are the gaps or what is NOT working in the current system of care/housing for youth and young adults who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness? Why is it NOT working (be specific as possible)?
7. Rank the solutions you think are MOST NEEDED to prevent and end youth homelessness for youth ages 18-24 in suburban Cook County, 1, or the solution listed first, being the solution most needed, and the solution listed last the least needed.
 - a. Case management and financial support to stay with family, friends or on own when safe and appropriate (diversion)
 - b. Emergency shelter
 - c. Transitional housing program (up to 24 months)
 - d. Drop-in center
 - e. Short to medium-term (3-24 months) rental assistance and case management
 - f. Long-term (2+ years) rental assistance and case management
 - g. Host Homes (temporarily staying with a host family)
 - h. Permanent supportive housing (permanent housing with intensive case management)
 - i. Youth outreach (engaging youth in the community)
 - j. Additional case management support for youth at-risk of homelessness from the welfare or justice system
8. What are the three main barriers to meeting the needs of youth who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness (choose only 3)?
 - a. Lack of training for organizations on best practices to better serve youth
 - b. Lack of flexible funding
 - c. Lack of adequate services for especially vulnerable youth (LGBTQ, DV survivors, pregnant/parenting, etc.)
 - d. Lack of youth specific outreach
 - e. Lack of transportation options
 - f. Lack of awareness of resources available
 - g. Stigma and/or youth do not consider themselves homeless
 - h. Other
9. (Optional) If you would like to add more information about barriers to meeting the needs of youth who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness that you selected above, do so here.
10. If your agency could receive additional funding to prevent and/or end youth homelessness, how would you use it?
11. If you had a magic wand to change one thing about how suburban Cook County is working to prevent and end youth homelessness, what would it be?
12. Our plan focuses on the following subpopulations of youth who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness: youth at-risk of homelessness, pregnant and parenting youth, youth who identify as LGBTQ, youth under 18, youth involved with the juvenile justice and foster care systems, and victims of sexual trafficking. *Please choose at least one or more population above to let us know how our plan should address the unique needs of that population. (i.e. to better identify youth under 18 who are homeless, we need to require all school district staff to be trained to identify homelessness and do a marketing campaign targeting youth in schools)*
13. (Optional) We are taking an inventory of organizations that provide services to youth under 25 that are homeless or at-risk of homelessness in suburban Cook County. Please list youth service

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providers in your area (including non-traditional service providers) and the main services provided.

14. (Optional) This survey is only a small part of our outreach for the YHDP CCP, other components include focus groups and key informant interviews. If you would like to be more involved, please leave your name, email.