

**COMMUNITY PARTNERS**  
**EQUITY**  
**AFFORDABLE HOUSING**  
**EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT**  
**CHOICE**  
**COORDINATED ASSESSMENT**  
**YOUTH POWER**  
**HARM REDUCTION**



Tucson Pima Collaboration  
To End Homelessness

**COORDINATED  
COMMUNITY PLAN TO  
PREVENT AND END  
YOUTH HOMELESSNESS**

**PIMA COUNTY, ARIZONA  
MARCH 2020**

**LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY**  
**SUPPORT**  
**FAMILY & FRIENDS**  
**EMPOWERMENT**  
**TUCSON PIMA COLLABORATION TO END HOMELESSNESS**

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# BACKGROUND

The Tucson Pima Collaboration to End Homelessness (TPCH) is a broad coalition of community and faith-based organizations, government agencies, local businesses, and volunteers committed to the mission of ending homelessness in Tucson and throughout Pima County, Arizona. TPCH operates the AZ-501 Continuum of Care (CoC) spanning 9,189 square miles of urban, suburban, and rural communities in Southern Arizona's Sonoran Desert. The CoC's coverage area is larger in landmass than the combined geographies of Delaware, Rhode Island, and Connecticut with population centers separated by expansive uninhabited desert areas. The County is home to two Federally recognized and sovereign tribal nations, the Pascua Yaqui Tribe and Tohono O'odham Nation. Social life and identity in Pima County reflects the confluence of the Mexican, indigenous, and American Western frontier cultural traditions found in the region.

The U.S. Census Bureau (2018) estimates the population of Pima County at 1,039,073, with just over one in five County residents under the age of 18 (20.9%). The county seat and population center, Tucson, is home to approximately half of the County's residents. Despite being a largely urbanized county, more than one-third of the region's residents live in unincorporated areas and Pima County government projects that the county's population will reach 1,400,000 by 2041.

## **TPCH Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP)**

The Tucson/Pima County Continuum of Care was selected by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as a Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program Round 3 community with a total funding allocation of \$4,558,069 in August, 2019. The YHDP initiative is seated within TPCH's existing

committee structure. Primary responsibility for the YHDP initiative is assigned to the TPCH Youth Action Committee and Homeless Youth Subcommittee.

## **TPCH Youth Action Committee**

The TPCH Youth Action Committee was established as a formal CoC committee in 2017 and is comprised of youth ages 24 and younger with lived experiences of homelessness or housing instability. The TPCH Youth Action Committee conducts research and planning related to youth homelessness to inform CoC Board decision-making. The Committee holds a voting seat on the CoC Board and members participate in committees, subcommittees, and initiatives throughout the CoC. The Youth Action Committee additionally serves as the parent committee to the TPCH Homeless Youth Subcommittee and works in tandem with the subcommittee as a primary planning body and joint decision-maker in the YHDP initiative.

## **TPCH Homeless Youth Subcommittee**

The Homeless Youth Subcommittee has operated as a TPCH planning body for more than two decades and, until the establishment of the Youth Action Committee in 2017, was the sole coordination body in the area working on behalf of homeless and near-homeless unaccompanied youth in the region. The Homeless Youth Subcommittee is comprised of representatives from more than 30 community-based and public entities and serves as the primary workspace and collaboration tank for the YHDP initiative. Jointly, the Homeless Youth Subcommittee and Youth Action Committee are responsible for YHDP decision-making as more fully described in the Governance section of this Plan.

## YHDP Lead Agencies

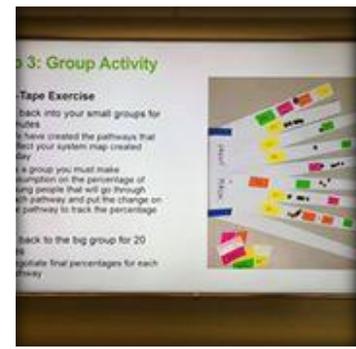
Our Family Services served as the planning lead for the YHDP initiative and is community-based not-for-profit organization with more than fifty years of experience working to address youth and family homelessness in Tucson and the surrounding area. The organization is the largest provider of housing and supportive services for unaccompanied homelessness youth in Pima County and operates street outreach, case management, crisis shelter, transitional housing, maternity group home, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing services for runaway and homeless youth with specialized services for LGBTQ+ young people and survivors of sex and labor trafficking.

The City of Tucson Housing and Community Development Department serves as the implementation lead for the YHDP initiative and

is the designated Collaborative Applicant/CoC Lead Agency for the AZ-501 Continuum of Care.

## YHDP Operations Team

The YHDP planning initiative has involved more than 150 individuals representing dozens of community agencies, stakeholder groups, and youth communities. A small but core operations team guides the initiative, provides planning support to the YHDP Lead Agencies and Youth Action Committee, and coordinates the efforts of community partners. The YHDP Operations Team includes representatives from Our Family Services, City of Tucson, Pima County, University of Arizona Southwest Institute for Research on Women, Youth On Their Own, Arizona Department of Child Safety, and Arizona Department of Education.



# VISION

In November 2019, the Homeless Youth Subcommittee and Youth Action Committee conducted a joint visioning exercise to identify key characteristics and elements of a desired end state to result from the YHDP initiative and broader local efforts to permanently address homelessness. A vision workgroup consisting of Youth Action Committee and Homeless Youth Subcommittee members was formed to refine concepts identified through the visioning exercise into a succinct vision to focus community efforts and measure progress. This vision was approved by the TPCH Homeless Youth Subcommittee and the Youth Action Committee on December 5, 2019.

## TUCSON/PIMA YHDP VISION STATEMENT

We envision communities and systems throughout Tucson/Pima County in which the causes of youth homelessness are disrupted and its solutions are permanent. This requires radical systems change built on intersectional equity and youth power. In these systems, young people drive individual housing solutions and hold equal power at all levels of community decision-making.

### KEY TENETS

The YHDP vision invokes multiple key tenets that are foundational to the initiative's efforts to address youth homelessness by centering the

experiences and expertise of young people impacted by homelessness and housing instability.

### Causes and Responsibility for Youth Homelessness

YHDP partners acknowledge that failures in social, community, and political systems are at the root of youth homelessness. We commit to disrupting the negative impacts of these systems and re-building local systems and structures in which all community members can thrive.

### Permanency

Too often, experiences of childhood and adolescent homelessness serve as gateways to persistent or recurrent economic, housing, and health instability. The connections between child welfare and juvenile justice involvement, homelessness, malnutrition, poor health, and adverse lifelong consequences are indisputable. Today's interventions for youth must not only respond to the consequences of trauma already incurred but must holistically prepare young people to transcend these experiences and restore positive trajectories. We commit to co-conspiring with young people experiencing homelessness and housing instability to chart personal paths to success and well-being on their own terms.

### Intersectional Equity

While traditional approaches to understanding difference and oppression can view individual aspects of identity within a vacuum and void of context, YHDP partners acknowledge the deep interwoven layers of identity that influence personal identity and the ways in which compounded oppression is often wielded to silence and further marginalize communities of color, immigrants, LGBTQ+ people, the poor,

and religious minorities, among others. We commit to using positions of privilege, shared power, and intentional community processes to uplift and amplify the voices of those most impacted by marginalization including young people who live at the crossroads of oppressed identities.

**Youth Power**

Dominant systems are built on adultism and an underlying mistrust in young people’s abilities to make healthy and responsible decisions. The Tucson/Pima YHDP initiative acknowledges that those who are the most impacted by community problems tend to be the closest to the solutions but the furthest from the resources. Simply put, young people more often than not possess the solutions to their personal experiences of housing instability and, at a collective level, to the broader issue of youth homelessness; however, they have been locked out of decision-making tables and relegated to undervalued and often overlooked

advisory and feedback roles. We believe that the best solutions are formed through a partnership in which system professionals and youth share information and expertise to support community improvement. We commit to re-tooling our systems and responses to youth homelessness for shared and equal power for youth with expertise gained through lived experience.

**Plan to Achieve YHDP Vision**

The YHDP vision can be summarized in three interconnected areas of focus: to disrupt the causes of youth homelessness, to develop and deploy permanent solutions to youth homelessness, and to amplify youth voice and elevate youth power. The YHDP Goals, Objectives, and Action Steps are intentionally intended to achieve these aims as demonstrated in the table of highlighted goals and objectives below and further defined in the Goals, Objectives, and Action Steps section of this Plan.

<b>Focus Area: To disrupt the causes of youth homelessness and housing instability.</b>	
<b>YHDP Goal</b>	<b>Highlighted YHDP Objectives/Strategies</b>
Youth Opportunity – To increase educational engagement and income generation among youth.	Improve youth access to and utilization of available mainstream benefits.
Health – To increase access to and use of medical, behavioral, dental, and social/emotional well-being resources.	Increase knowledge and utilization of community health and well-being resources among youth experiencing homelessness.
Homelessness Prevention – To better identify and immediately assist youth at risk of experiencing homelessness.	<p>Establish a flexible resource pool designated for diversion and prevention of youth homelessness or housing instability. Leverage public prevention resources to improve accessibility and reduce barriers for youth.</p> <p>Improve identification of youth at-risk of homelessness and rapid connection to homeless response system among youth served through child welfare, juvenile and adult justice, hospitals, education, and workforce development systems.</p> <p>Elevate existing informal discharge partnerships to establish system-wide discharge planning approaches and coordination to reduce youth exits from institutions to homelessness.</p>

Data and Coordinated Entry – To leverage data and coordinated entry as tools for ending youth homelessness.	Establish a coordinated entry model for youth under the age of 18 <u>or</u> develop direct transfer pathways for minor-age youth aging into adulthood and still in need of housing assistance.
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<b>Focus Area: To develop and deploy permanent solutions to youth homelessness.</b>	
<b>YHDP Goal</b>	<b>Highlighted YHDP Objectives/Strategies</b>
Housing – To improve housing permanency and decrease repeat homelessness among youth.	<p>Expand array of housing options available to youth experiencing homelessness.</p> <p>Decrease returns to homelessness among youth engaged in the homeless response system.</p> <p>Increase number of youth-dedicated permanent housing units for youth in the homelessness response system.</p> <p>Promote safe, inclusive shelter, housing, and services in local community.</p> <p>Promote participation in education and employment resources that further the individual goals of youth experiencing homelessness.</p>
Data and Coordinated Entry – To leverage data and coordinated entry as tools for ending youth homelessness.	Improve Coordinated Entry system’s ability to swiftly connect youth experiencing homelessness and/or living in dangerous environments to housing.

<b>Focus Area: To amplify youth voice and elevate youth power.</b>	
<b>YHDP Goal</b>	<b>Highlighted YHDP Objectives/Strategies</b>
Youth Voice and Action – To engage youth in leading and implementing strategies to address youth homelessness.	<p>Elevate youth voice within the Continuum of Care and other community decision-making bodies.</p> <p>Develop a sustainable resource plan to support the Youth Action Committee.</p> <p>Develop and implement tools and technical assistance to promote youth leadership opportunities within youth service providing agencies and community-level planning groups.</p> <p>Mobilize youth with lived experience of housing instability as agents of change in civic and social arenas.</p>

# PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

The Tucson/Pima YHDP has identified the following Principles and Values to guide local efforts to prevent and end youth homelessness and achieve the YHDP's bold vision.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1: ADOPT THE UNITED STATES INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS (USICH) YOUTH FRAMEWORK AND THE FOUR CORE OUTCOMES**

TPCH is committed to implementing the principles of the 2012 USICH Framework to End Youth Homelessness and its four core outcomes as follows:

### **Stable Housing**

Safe, reliable places to call home for unaccompanied runaway and homeless youth. Housing planning begins at the time of outreach contact and/or Coordinated Entry assessment locally and includes a preliminary triage and diversion strategy to evaluate alternative stable housing opportunities that reinforce existing natural support networks and prioritize those models above supportive housing whenever possible. Program participants are assessed regularly throughout service participation to plan individualized move-on strategies that promote housing stability.

### **Permanent Connections**

Ongoing attachment and connectedness to families, communities, schools, and other positive social networks of young people's choosing. Local projects offer crisis intervention and family reunification supports to assist and support youth as they re-connect to families of origin and/or other supportive peers and adults.

### **Education/Employment**

High performance in and completion of education and training activities especially for younger youth, and starting and maintaining adequate and stable employment particularly for older youth. Area high schools participate in the local Coordinated Entry system, specialized training and employment resources are provided for youth experiencing homelessness through the local workforce development system, and on-campus resource programs are available at the local university to support students experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness.

### **Social/Emotional Well-being**

Key competencies, attitudes, and behaviors equipping young people to succeed across multiple domains of daily life including school, work, relationships, and community. Social and wellness groups, along with individual and group counseling, are offered at local drop-in centers, integrated health centers, and youth programs help young people clarify personal boundaries, recover from trauma, and build healthy relationships.

These core outcomes underlie the Goals, Action Steps, and Outcomes of this plan and are fully incorporated in all associated implementation strategies.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2: FOCUS ON SPECIAL POPULATIONS**

The impacts of homelessness and housing instability on various groups of young people differ and require unique and tailored responses. TPCH recognizes the unique impacts of homelessness on LGBTQ+ youth, youth of color, minor-aged youth, pregnant and parenting youth, young people with histories of

child welfare and/or justice involvement, young survivors of human trafficking, and immigrant youth populations, among others.

The Special Populations section of this Plan identifies the unique housing, education, employment, well-being, and permanent connection needs of these subpopulations of homeless youth along with planned improvement strategies, and an assessment of resources and supports needed to achieve the planned improvements.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3: EQUITY

As described under the Vision heading, the Tucson/Pima County YHDP is founded on a commitment to using positions of privilege, shared power, and intentional community processes to uplift and amplify the voices of those most impacted by marginalization including local community members who live at the crossroads of intersecting oppressed identities.



1

Local data analyses indicate notable disparities in rates of poverty and homelessness within Pima County communities. Disproportionately high rates of poverty are experienced by, Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latinx, and Native American/American Indian community members. These disparities are paralleled in

1 Visualizing Equity – One Size Does Not Fit All Infographic, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

2 TPCH Homeless Youth Needs Assessment, LeCroy & Milligan Associates, 2019.

disproportionately high rates of homelessness among these groups and most significantly experienced by unaccompanied Black/African-American males, parenting Hispanic/Latinx females, and all subpopulations of Native American/American Indian youth. Positively, these analyses indicate that access to and engagement in crisis and transitional housing services is in parity with the rates of homelessness experienced by racial and ethnic subpopulations.

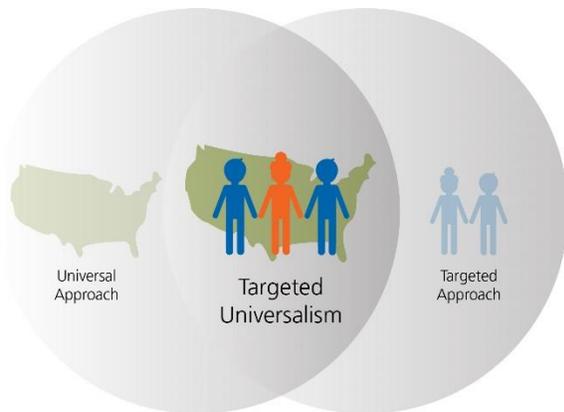
Local research sponsored by TPCH, and conducted by Our Family Services, LeCroy & Milligan Associates, and the Office of Sex Trafficking Intervention Research at Arizona State University indicates rates of LGBTQ+ youth homelessness ranging from 21%<sup>2</sup> to 46.5%<sup>3</sup> of the overall homeless youth population in the region, significantly higher than the percentage of LGBTQ+ people generally assumed to be residing in the community.

Limited data is currently accessible to support a more comprehensive assessment of access to permanent housing, education, income, and social outcomes according to race and ethnicity; however, TPCH anticipates conducting this analysis of YHDP programs and other youth-serving programs during the YHDP performance period.

In 2019, TPCH was also selected as one of ten communities nationally to participate in the A Way Home America Grand Challenge, a two-year initiative supported by A Way Home America and a network of national technical assistance providers to end homelessness among youth of color and LGBTQ+ youth within two years.

3 2019 Youth Experiences Survey - Tucson Report, Arizona State University Office of Sex Trafficking Intervention Research, 2019.

TPCH commits to and has developed YHDP goals, objectives, and action steps in alignment with a targeted universalism approach on which the Grand Challenge is based. This approach centers the experiences and needs of LGBTQ+ youth, youth of color, and other youth subpopulations with unique needs in all YHDP activities and projects.



4

Through the YHDP planning process, TPCH has committed to:

1. Exploring and explicitly naming white dominant, hetero-normative, cisgender-normative, ageist, ableist, paternalistic, and binary-focused cultures and practices that are present within the systems and organizations currently working to address youth homelessness.
2. Re-envisioning engagement strategies to better reflect the rich diversity of the region, re-distribute power, and more effectively engage diverse stakeholders at all levels of the YHDP and Continuum of Care, prioritizing opportunities for participation and representation of people with lived experiences of homelessness and housing instability.

3. Mapping concrete steps to address and change those aspects of organizational, institutional, and systemic culture within the work of the YHDP and the Continuum of Care as a whole.
4. Balancing intentionality and action through thoughtful processes and opportunities for reflection at the individual, organizational, system, and community levels driven toward meaningful change.
5. Dedicating the time and resources, financial and otherwise, needed to create transformative change and meaningfully increase equity and social justice within the youth homelessness response system.
6. Promoting cross-sector collaboration and expanding efforts to address racial equity and LGBTQ+ inclusivity with system partners including education, workforce, health, behavioral health, and other systems which impact youth experiencing homelessness and housing instability.
7. Embracing the work of racial equity and LGBTQ+ inclusivity as an on-going improvement process and developing systems for routine evaluation and evolution informed and led by historically marginalized communities.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLE 4: POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT & TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

### Positive Youth Development

TPCH and YHDP stakeholders recognize that effective youth engagement and intervention has little to do with “fixing” problem behaviors and should instead be focused on building and

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<sup>4</sup> *Targeted Universalism – FSG: Reimagining Social Change, 2018.*

nurturing beliefs, knowledge, attributes, and skills that result in healthy, productive, and fulfilled adolescence and adulthood. This positive youth development approach is supported by resiliency research and aimed at cultivating developmental assets leading to six key youth attributes.

Connection: A feeling of safety, structure, and belonging; positive bonds with people and social institutions.

Confidence: A sense of self-worth and mastery; having a belief in one's capacity to succeed.

Character: Taking responsibility; a sense of independence and individuality; connection to principles and values.

Caring: Sympathy and empathy for others; commitment to social justice.

Contribution: Active participation and leadership in a variety of settings; making a difference.

Competence: The ability to act effectively in school, in social situations, and at work.

In its efforts to prevent and end youth homelessness, TPCH will organize youth services, opportunities, and supports in alignment with positive youth development principles.

1. Assessment tools, services, and outcome measurement will be strength-based, intentionally helping young people develop competencies, values, and connections for life and work.
2. Services will be provided in supportive, non-judgmental settings in which young people are safe to test new beliefs and approaches, falter or fail, learn, and experience positive and negative natural consequences.

3. All activities will engage and amplify youth voice and leadership, providing meaningful decision-making roles for young people with lived expertise in projects, systems, and local communities.
4. Opportunities for young people impacted by homelessness and housing instability, particularly traditionally marginalized or disenfranchised subpopulations, will reach beyond housing and supportive service projects into the broader community, fostering rich social and community connectedness.
5. Commitments to young people will be enduring and not limited by housing or service participation; local efforts will be embedded in an integrated service framework that bridges young people from crisis services to long-term stability, knitting a community safety net to respond to future setbacks.

### **Trauma Informed Care**

Trauma-informed approaches are embraced by agencies serving runaway and homeless youth. Using a trauma-informed lens, local youth service providers work to understand and consider the pervasive nature of trauma and to prevent re-traumatization by promoting environments of healing and recovery. These programs help young people recognize the presence of trauma symptoms, acknowledge the role trauma plays in their lives, and cultivate healthy alternatives to trauma-based coping strategies.

YHDP partners will organize youth services, opportunities, and supports in alignment with principles of trauma-informed care intended to avoid re-traumatization.

1. Front porch, crisis, and long-term services will promote physical and emotional safety among participants. Real and perceived threats to safety will be paramount and

young people will be offered and referred to welcoming, culturally appropriate, and affirming program environments.

2. Youth will be supported to exercise personal choice and control in all aspects of their lives including housing, education, employment, social activities, and services in which they do or do not participate. Youth will have opportunities to voice dissatisfaction and concern, and will be supported by advocates to get their needs met or identify appropriate alternatives.
3. Young people will be defined on their own terms and not reduced to labels or past life experiences. Unhealthy relationships, high-risk sexual activity, substance use, and self-harming behaviors will be understood in the context of trauma and not used to shame or penalize young people.
4. Assessment, referral and intake strategies will protect individual privacy while allowing for data sharing and co-enrollment practices that prevent re-traumatization and limit the number of times young people are asked to share traumatic personal experiences.
5. Project staff and volunteers will be trained to build trust, honor young people's personal boundaries, and allow youth to set the pace and limits to their individual relationships with peers and helping professionals.

While an understanding of positive youth development, developmental assets, and trauma is considered foundational knowledge and required competencies in youth work locally; staff burnout, vicarious trauma, and high turnover in youth programs often means that direct service staff may have little experience applying these principles. Through the YHDP initiative, TPCH and the Youth Action Committee intend to implement more

advanced trauma-informed care learning modules for project staff including classroom instruction, live role play, problem-solving, and opportunities to participate in peer learning communities.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLE 5: FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**



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

In the current youth housing system, family engagement is generally focused on family reunification with the greatest emphasis placed on reunifying unaccompanied youth under the age of 18 with their families of origin. For older youth, family reunification is generally a self-directed activity and while general case management and counseling services are often available, there are few if any evidence-based and targeted strategies currently in use to promote family engagement.

Projects funded through the YHDP and other initiatives resulting from this plan will:

1. Offer and incorporate evidence-informed family engagement approaches into the menu of supportive services offered to all youth participants.
2. Help youth participants clarify personal goals and boundaries related to their relationships with their families of origin and of choice.
3. Support and encourage youth to engage with their families; honor young people's relationships with family members regardless of the perceived positive or negative influence on the youth.
4. Offer family reunification assistance and continued support to promote successful family functioning if desired by the youth and their family.

Through its efforts to prevent and end youth homelessness, TPCH anticipates launching increased education for youth service providers to identify and eliminate barriers to family engagement in local programs where they exist, to increase staff training related to family engagement, and to strengthen trauma-informed case management, peer support, and therapeutic services to help youth address and overcome trauma resulting from negative family experiences when needed.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLE 6: IMMEDIATE ACCESS TO HOUSING WITHOUT PRECONDITIONS**

TPCH Written Standards require that all Federally funded housing programs operate in a Housing First framework. Local CoC and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) programs are prohibited from placing preconditions on housing services such as employment,

sobriety, educational enrollment, or income on housing services and all supportive services are provided on a voluntary basis. While the CoC's Housing First mandate seeks to ensure youth have access to housing without preconditions, the overwhelming shortage of available crisis shelter, supportive housing, and affordable housing resources in the region make immediate access to housing of any kind nearly impossible. TPCH Longitudinal System Analysis data<sup>5</sup> reveals that unaccompanied homeless youth ages 18-24 in adult only households report an average of 218 days homeless before interacting with the local homeless response system and an average of additional 101 days homeless before securing permanent housing once they have made contact with the system. By comparison, parenting youth ages 18-24 experiencing homelessness report an average of 195 days homeless before making contact with the local homeless response system and 162 days homeless after first contact for an overall average of 212 pre-contact days and 117 post-contact days of total homelessness before entering permanent housing (329 total days).

The CoC's Housing First philosophy for youth is not synonymous with "housing only." Project staff use progressive engagement techniques and motivational interviewing approaches to help youth identify individual goals, barriers to their success, and available resources and services to help eliminate those barriers. Despite these efforts, unintended "housing only" interventions still occur resulting in situations in which youth time permitted in time-limited housing interventions before obtaining the education, income, and competencies needed to navigate adulthood successfully. Consequently, returns to homelessness are not uncommon and local youth and service providers acknowledge there is significant

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<sup>5</sup> *Tucson/Pima County FY18 Longitudinal System Analysis – Stella P (TPCH, 2019).*

opportunity for system improvements as it relates to housing immediacy and outcomes.

Through the YHDP and resulting initiatives, TPCH anticipates addressing these challenges through four complementary strategies:

1. Developing a centralized youth housing advocacy portal through which youth can report and obtain assistance addressing legal and programmatic barriers to housing.
2. Expanding youth-specific crisis and long-term supportive housing options designed to immediately stabilize youth in safe housing.
3. Subsidizing case management and services for youth accessing specialty Family Unification Program and Homeless Preference Program vouchers offered by the local Public Housing Authority.
4. Expanding training offerings to include classroom education and peer learning communities for youth-serving staff with the aim of increasing knowledge and skills related to progressive engagement and motivational interviewing.
5. Diversifying the network of aligned community resources and services to which youth experiencing homelessness are referred, and improving coordination of service linkages.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLE 7: YOUTH CHOICE**

Tucson/Pima County youth advocates are committed to expanding and upholding youth choice as central to not only the YHDP initiative but also to re-tooling existing programs. Currently outdated and paternalistic models offer limited flexibility and little opportunity for youth to exercise independent decision-making in their living environments and arrangements.

While the current system upholds youth choice in selection of supportive services, providers, and social activities; youth choice in housing is generally limited to decisions to accept or reject a particular crisis or supportive housing placement. When housing is accepted, a young person may have limited rental opportunities stemming from the region's profound shortage of affordable housing, resistance among community property owners and managers to renting to youth receiving housing subsidy, strict rules and requirements of low-income/affordable housing properties, and personal rental histories punctuated by non-payment, lease infractions, and eviction.

Through the YHDP and resulting initiatives, TPCH anticipates addressing these challenges by:

1. Training community housing providers in the variety of housing configurations and models permitted under existing Federal and non-Federal funding streams.
2. Advocating for the targeting of non-Federal housing resources to alternative housing approaches such as shallow and long-term subsidies, co-housing arrangements, host home options, and financial support for permanent housing provided by nuclear and extended family members.
3. Expanding shared housing opportunities through roommate matching services, campus housing, room and board, and other shared living arrangements based on youth preference.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLE 8: INDIVIDUALIZED AND YOUTH-DRIVEN SUPPORT**

Throughout the CoC, individualized service options vary based on program, provider, and location. While some local providers have fortified strong service linkages which unlock access to a wide array of services based on

each youth's individual needs and preferences, others continue to operate in programmatic silos offering a limited array of specialized services. Similarly, case management services vary among providers and even among staff within organizations. Helping professionals regularly use standardized case management approaches and establish one-to-one relationships across systems and rely on these relationships to eliminate barriers for youth seeking access. While this approach can accelerate service access for individual youth, it is characteristic of an inefficient service environment in which resource availability is based more on who one knows than on universal accessibility. The unintended consequence is too often disparate resource availability with the hardest to serve and marginalized youth most negatively impacted.

To elevate the role of individualized youth-driven supports within the local service environment, TPCH intends to achieve the following through the YHDP and resulting initiatives:

1. Improving community fidelity to the TPCH Coordinated Entry system's VI-SPDAT triage process and ensuring youth are assessed using the appropriate screening tools.
2. Expanding use of the evidence-informed Y-SPDAT case management tool to help case managers and youth participants assess personal strengths, assets, and service needs holistically.
3. Conducting on-going staff training related to youth collaboration and autonomy in service design and participation.
4. Promoting youth-driven case management and assessment of service needs allowing youth to assess previously identified goals and services with opportunity to re-chart course as needed.

5. Establishing a community-wide resource network to facilitate cross-referral and co-enrollment wherever possible to expand service options and accessibility for all youth.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLE 9: SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY INTEGRATION**

Youth experiencing homelessness are often disenfranchised from the social, educational, and recreational institutions that play a formative role in the lives of their peers. The YHDP planning team acknowledges the vital role that community plays in young people's lives and is committed to removing existing barriers to social and community integration such as:

- Project requirements that limit visitors by number and hour unless put in place at the request of the youth participant(s). Too often these attempts to ensure safety and prevent harm to youth in housing programs have resulted in removing young people from their communities and/or requiring that they return to unsafe environments to spend time with their social networks.
- Attempting to limit contact with "negative" influences for youth rather than helping young people set boundaries around their personal relationships and develop self-advocacy and other positive interpersonal skills that support healthy, meaningful relationships.
- Programmatic obstacles to continued and new social involvement in communities of faith, recreational activities, and peer groups such as restrictive curfews, limited transportation, and strict budgets that preclude social engagement.

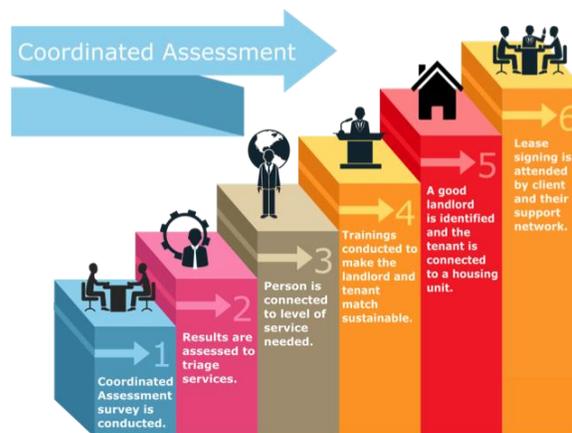
YHDP projects will provide safe, flexible environments that encourage social and community integration by:

1. Accounting for social activity of youth's choosing in daily schedules and budgets.
2. Providing flexible program rules and expectations that permit variation based on young people's social and community activities.
3. Mitigating financial and transportation barriers to social and community activities.
4. Permitting guests in residential programs according to youth's personal boundaries and limited only by lease requirements and, if site-based, programmatic rules that are grounded firmly in safety, privacy, and respect for other residents.
5. Assisting youth to negotiate and develop roommate agreements in shared housing that balance social connectedness and mutual respect.
6. Promoting participation in new social and community activities and hosting/offering opportunities for youth to explore and participate in community events, social activities, and creative ventures in which they may not have previously engaged.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE 10:  
COORDINATED ENTRY FOR YOUTH**

TPCH uses a “no wrong door” approach to Coordinated Entry through which young people ages 18-24 in need of housing assistance can be triaged for emergency, prevention, and diversion services; referred to appropriate navigation services; and assessed for long-term housing interventions if needed at one of seven community-based public access points including a youth service site. Coordinated Entry triage, diversion, and assessment is also

completed through a network of more than 700 community assessors working in behavioral health, school, and street outreach programs.



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Young adults are assessed for and referred to available community programs which include multiple types of Bridge Housing, Maternity Group Home, Transitional Housing, Rapid Rehousing, and Permanent Supportive Housing options including but not limited to projects specifically designed and designated for youth under the age of 25.

Youth under the age of 18 are able to access immediate crisis assistance 24 hours/day, 7 days/week through a network of community Safe Place locations including area nonprofit agencies, convenience stores, public buses, libraries, and other government and youth-friendly business locations. Unaccompanied youth accessing the Safe Place network are immediately connected to the region's Basic Center Program for runaway and homeless teens through which they have access to family mediation and reunification services, crisis shelter, individual and family counseling, academic re-engagement, and other services.

<sup>6</sup> *Coordinated Assessment and Entry – Metro Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI), 2017.*



While there is active participation among youth service providers in the Coordinated Entry system and a strong local commitment to fully integrating youth into the regional response to ending homelessness, opportunities remain to significantly improve the system's approach to doing so. Specific strategies to improve Coordinated Entry for youth have been conceived through TPC's recent participation in the MANY Coordinated Entry Learning Collaborative (2018-2019), and have been further refined and incorporated into the Goals, Objectives, and Action Steps included in this Plan. Specifically, TPC seeks to accomplish two primary objectives related to improving the local Coordinated Entry system for youth:

1. To better identify all youth experiencing homelessness under any Federal definition in Pima County.
2. To improve the Coordinated Entry system's ability to swiftly connect youth experiencing homelessness and/or living in dangerous environments to housing.

Specific strategies to achieve these aims include expanding the existing by name list of youth experiencing literal homelessness to include all youth experiencing homelessness under any Federal definition, establishing a Coordinated Entry model for youth under the age of 18 or developing a direct transfer pathway through which youth receiving housing assistance under the age of 18 are immediately prioritized for adult housing assistance upon their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday without service disruption, establishing navigation and

diversion services tailored to the unique needs and circumstances of youth experiencing homelessness, improving coordination with schools and other service areas frequented by youth, and updating case conferencing and prioritization processes to improve the system's responsiveness to the unique factors associated with youth homelessness.

## **DATA MANAGEMENT AND UTILIZATION**

This Plan incorporates strategies to improve data quality and system capacity to identify and assist youth experiencing homelessness.

- Re-tooling the CoC's youth by name list to include youth experiencing homelessness under any Federal definition.
- Developing and implementing data-sharing and cross-referral procedures across sectors to update and maintain an active youth by name list.
- Hosting Youth Point in Time Count events at community locations throughout the region.
- Expanding the role of youth in planning, promoting, and conducting the annual Point in Time Count of youth experiencing homelessness.
- Partnering with local schools to enumerate students experiencing homelessness in schools in conjunction with or as part of the annual Point in Time Count.
- Filling existing gaps in diversion, crisis, transitional, and permanent housing resources identified through local data collection and analysis.
- Expanding performance metrics for CoC and YHDP youth projects to include a more robust set of common data elements .

# SPECIAL POPULATIONS

## LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, QUEER + YOUTH



Local data sets vary considerably regarding the prevalence and characteristics of LGBTQ+ youth homelessness. HMIS data indicates that fewer than 5% of youth engaging in the Tucson/Pima County homelessness response system report identifying as LGBTQ+ at the time of Coordinated Entry assessment and/or project intake while surveys conducted by local researchers in partnership with youth service agencies indicate rates of LGBTQ+ youth homelessness ranging from 21%<sup>7</sup> to 46.5%<sup>8</sup> of the overall homeless youth population in the region. As the majority of youth completing these services participate in programs also reported the HMIS, this discrepancy suggests that young people are uncomfortable or unsafe disclosing sexual orientation and/or true gender identity during Coordinated Entry and intake processes.

### Unique Needs

LGBTQ+ youth experiencing homelessness commonly report fractured or entirely

disconnected connections to their families of origin; 67% of youth surveyed in the TPCH 2019 Homeless Youth Needs Assessment reported being kicked out by their families as the primary cause of their homelessness, 50% higher than the rate of their heterosexual and cisgender peers<sup>9</sup>. Many have suffered compounded traumas of bullying and abuse, family rejection, and victimization. Forty-nine percent of youth completing the same survey indicated that mental/physical health issues and substance abuse played a key role in their homelessness. LGBTQ+ youth experiencing homelessness express fear for their safety at rates 250% higher than that of their heterosexual and cisgender peers (24% vs 7%)<sup>10</sup> and report experiences of sex trafficking at much higher rates. Additionally, 56% of young people experiencing homelessness who reported sex trafficking experiences in a recent study by Arizona State University<sup>11</sup> identified as LGBTQ+.

There are limited crisis housing options dedicated to and specifically designed to meet the needs of youth experiencing homelessness and just two single occupancy crisis transitional units dedicated for LGBTQ+ youth. While there have been strides taken to improve safety and inclusivity within adult shelter systems, faith participation requirements, dormitory shelter design, and other factors can leave these spaces uninviting or unsafe for LGBTQ+ youth.

### Community Assets

LGBTQ+ youth service agencies including Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation's Thornhill Lopez Center on 4<sup>th</sup> and the University of

<sup>7</sup> TPCH Homeless Youth Needs Assessment, LeCroy & Milligan Associates, 2019.

<sup>8</sup> 2019 Youth Experiences Survey - Tucson Report, Arizona State University Office of Sex Trafficking Intervention Research, 2019.

<sup>9</sup> TPCH Homeless Youth Needs Assessment, LeCroy & Milligan Associates, 2019.

<sup>10</sup> TPCH Homeless Youth Needs Assessment, LeCroy & Milligan Associates, 2019.

<sup>11</sup> 2019 Youth Experiences Survey - Tucson Report, Arizona State University Office of Sex Trafficking Intervention Research, 2019.

Arizona's Lighthouse Project offer safe and welcoming outreach, drop-in centers, housing navigation, health and behavioral health programming, education and employment connections, social and wellness groups, and other services for LGBTQ+ youth experiencing homelessness. These agencies also offer training and professional education for outreach, shelter, and supportive housing providers throughout the community to increase their understanding, capacity, and practices to improve services and outcomes for LGBTQ+ youth experiencing homelessness.

### **Continued Improvement Strategies**

1. Initiate Coordinated Entry assessment at LGBTQ+ youth service sites allowing LGBTQ+ young people to bridge directly to diversion, homelessness prevention, and supportive housing services in spaces that are familiar and affirming.
2. Implement targeted universalism strategies within existing and new crisis, transitional, and permanent housing services for youth with intentional and fortified bridges to LGBTQ+ competent therapeutic and substance abuse treatment services, health care providers, social enrichment opportunities, and other resources.
3. Continue training with traditionally adult serving shelter and supportive housing programs to improve capacity and service delivery for LGBTQ+ youth.
4. Advocate for safe youth wings or other space designations within the local crisis housing stock.
5. Incorporate LGBTQ+ young people into the design and delivery of LGBTQ+ training and technical assistance services for youth and adult service agencies.
6. Build out workforce development strategies for transgender, gender-nonconforming, and gender non-binary youth to support safe employment and income opportunities that do not compromise gender identity.

### **Resources and Supports Needed to Achieve Strategic Improvements**

Financial resources and long-term partner commitments are needed to improve services and outcomes for LGBTQ+ youth experiencing homelessness. Financial resources are needed to fund the participation of young people in revising and delivering training and technical assistance services; develop unique and affirming employment strategies, expand crisis and supportive housing options, and potentially resource capital costs associated with re-configuring existing crisis shelter and supportive housing stock. Long-term partner commitments and sustained collaboration are, however, the most critical need to improve the safety and inclusivity of existing housing and supportive services resources. While one-time and recurring training is often available and provided throughout the community, there is the absence of and a need for an on-going quality improvement cycle that helps organizations and helping professionals not only learn about the special needs of LGBTQ+ youth but to make meaningful changes to improve safety and inclusivity, have access to on-going technical assistance and support to address challenges, and fully embed youth-affirming practices within service environments and approaches.

### **YOUTH OF COLOR**



Pima County shares its southern border with the Mexican state of Sonora and is home to two Federally recognized Native American reservations. Tohono O'odham and Pascua Yaqui trust lands total more than one third of

the County's geographic area. People of color represent 44.9% of the region's total population<sup>12</sup>, 89.7% of the region's population living below the poverty line<sup>13</sup>, and 54% percent of youth ages 18-24 seeking assistance through the local Coordinated Entry system<sup>14</sup>.

By contrast, youth of color account for 70% of unaccompanied youth under the age of 18 and 68% of unaccompanied youth ages 18-24. Current HMIS functionality limits the community's ability to measure and report the prevalence of pregnant and parenting youth according to race and ethnicity; however, local data indicates that families of color account for 72% of all family households receiving housing and supportive services recorded in the local HMIS<sup>15</sup>. The YHDP Planning Team estimates that the prevalence of youth of color within the pregnant and parenting youth households likely parallels or exceeds this number.

### **Unique Needs**

Disproportionately high rates of poverty among youth of color in the region are profound with the greatest disproportionality experienced by Native American/American Indian (38.5% poverty rate), Black/African American (28.1% poverty rate), and Hispanic/Latinx communities (23.6% poverty rate)<sup>16</sup>. Poverty alone cannot explain or account for the high rates of homelessness experienced by youth of color in the region, however. Systemic injustice as it relates to education and employment opportunity, policing and justice involvement, housing access, and school and neighborhood segregation further disenfranchise young people of color. An August 2019 analysis of racial and ethnic disparities in the local homeless response system found that unaccompanied Black/African American male

youth experience homelessness for longer periods of time and pregnant and parenting Hispanic/Latinx females are more likely to experience homelessness than other young people. These disparities indicate the need for continued analysis and system responses that address the unique needs of individual racial, ethnic, and cultural groups rather than an homogenized "one size fits all" approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

People of color are under-represented in the workforce and leadership of the local homeless response system and other systems with which youth experiencing homelessness interact. The resulting representation gap can further alienate youth of color. Limited representation re-enforces a white dominant service culture in which young people's unique needs, cultural norms and practices may be overlooked or altogether de-valued.

Given the region's proximity to the U.S.-Mexico border and the strong presence of multiple international refugee resettlement programs, it is not surprising that there are large populations of non-citizen youth living in poverty in the region and at risk of homelessness. These groups include, among others, undocumented Central and South American nationals; young people enrolled in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program; and African, Asian, and Middle Eastern refugees. Non-citizen youth often carry special needs related to language barriers, acculturation, and resource networks. Many have special legal needs related to immigration, employment, and benefits access. Furthermore, fear of legal action or deportation prevent many from seeking benefits for which they may be eligible and require strong and trusted advocacy before accessing

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<sup>12</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2018.

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2018.

<sup>14</sup> TPCH 2017-2018 Youth Coordinated Entry Assessment Analysis, 2018.

<sup>15</sup> FY18 Tucson/Pima County Longitudinal System Analysis – Stella P, 2018.

<sup>16</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 statistics via MAP ([www.mapazdashboard.arizona.edu](http://www.mapazdashboard.arizona.edu))

mainstream benefits or social service programs.

### **Community Assets**

TPCH will launch a two-year strategy to end homelessness among youth of color and LGBTQ+ youth in Pima County in October 2020. Through this initiative, TPCH will benefit from technical assistance, expertise, and a national community of practice as it works toward the aim of achieving functional zero in homelessness among youth of color and LGBTQ+ youth by September 2022.

As described previously in this Plan, TPCH has completed an initial data analysis of racial equity as it relates to sheltered and unsheltered homelessness. In February 2020, the CoC Board convened a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee to conduct further baseline analysis of equity in permanent housing placement, outcomes, and returns to homelessness; develop targeted improvement strategies; and monitor progress toward the intended aim of improving equity within the homelessness response system.

### **Continued Improvement Strategies**

1. Finish baseline analysis of racial and ethnic disparities within the local homelessness response system and incorporate ongoing measurement strategies to assess progress toward equity and opportunity among youth of color.
2. Develop targeted improvement strategies at the project, organization, and system levels.
3. Adapt the local homelessness response system using a targeted universalism strategy.
4. Strengthen partnerships with legal service providers as they relate to immigration and civil and criminal justice issues.

5. Increase diversity, equity, and inclusion within the workforce and leadership of local homelessness response system.

6. Collaborate with education, employment, and justice sectors to address system barriers to opportunity for youth of color.

### **Resources and Supports Needed to Achieve Strategic Improvements**

A focused commitment of time, effort, and resources is needed to re-tool the local youth homelessness response system, improve outcomes, and accelerate efforts to eliminate homelessness among youth of color in the region. In order to fully engage the broader community in these efforts and sustain change efforts beyond initial education, it is expected that targeted engagement strategies such as participation incentives may be needed to resource the sustained participation and commitment of service agencies. Additionally, it is expected that additional supportive service dollars are needed to make access to a broader array of culturally-appropriate legal, employment, education, and other services is needed to meaningfully remove or mitigate barriers to equity and opportunity for young people of color.

There is considerable opportunity for improved partnerships and alignment between the CoC and Tribal programs, as well as immigrant and refugee resettlement programs. Prior efforts to strengthen these partnerships have been limited and with little result. Partnerships with these systems and opportunities for resource-sharing are especially needed to address the unique needs of Native American/American Indian and immigrant youth populations.

### **UNACCOMPANIED MINORS**

The prevalence of unaccompanied youth under the age of 18 at risk of or experiencing homelessness is under-documented by the local homeless response system. HUD-

sponsored data collection strategies such as the local HMIS and Point in Time Count offer insufficient insight into the prevalence and characteristics of unaccompanied minors in the region. Local agencies and community planners must rely on alternative data sets to estimate the scope of homelessness among juvenile teenagers. These include health provider, school, and other service provider organization. The local HMIS recorded a total of 26 unaccompanied minors receiving covered housing and supportive services in Pima County between November 1, 2018 and September 30, 2019<sup>17</sup> and the 2018 Tucson/Pima County Point in Time Count identified a total of 6 unaccompanied minors<sup>18</sup>, all of whom were sheltered and therefore also accounted for in the 26 youth entered into the HMIS. By comparison, local health care, child welfare, and juvenile justice systems identified 166 unaccompanied and 14 pregnant and parenting minors experiencing homelessness during similar twelve-month periods<sup>19</sup>. These systems also identified 371 unaccompanied minors and 12 pregnant and parenting minors as being at risk of homelessness<sup>20</sup> highlighting the urgent need for multi-sector strategies responding to homelessness and unstable housing among unaccompanied and pregnant and parenting minors.

### Unique Needs

Younger youth at risk of and experiencing homelessness face unique challenges related to education, income, housing, and health and behavioral health services. While Federal and state laws protect the rights of minors experiencing homelessness to enroll in school and consent for physical and behavioral

healthcare, familiarity and practice related to these laws is inconsistent. Minor age youth are often unfamiliar with the legal protections afforded to them and may have limited ability or comfort engaging in self-advocacy to ensure those rights are protected.



*Our Family Services – Reunion House Crisis Shelter for Teens Ages 12-17.*

Because of their age, unaccompanied and pregnant and parenting minors are unable to enter into binding legal agreements without guardian signature including leases for housing. The only exception to this is found in Title 12, Chapter 15 of the Arizona Revised Statutes which permits emancipated minors to enter into legal agreements. State law requires that minors demonstrate financial self-sufficiency and a history of not less than three months of self-sufficient independent living as a pre-requisite for emancipation<sup>21</sup>, however, leaving the statute largely unused.

Arizona law also requires that residential programs licensed by the Arizona Department of Child Safety and the Arizona Department of Health Services obtain parent/guardian consent within 24 of hours of program entry placing youth under the age of 18 experiencing homelessness in a challenging situation if they are unwilling or unable to obtain parent or guardian consent. When consent can be

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<sup>17</sup> Tucson/Pima County Annualized Estimates of the Number of Youth Experiencing or At Risk of Experiencing Homelessness (Estimate Detail by Data Source) Table later in this report, 2020.

<sup>18</sup> TPCCH AZ-501 Point in Time Count, 2018.

<sup>19</sup> Tucson/Pima County Annualized Estimates of the Number of Youth Experiencing or At Risk of Experiencing

Homelessness (Estimate Detail by Data Source) Table later in this report, 2020.

<sup>20</sup> Tucson/Pima County Annualized Estimates of the Number of Youth Experiencing or At Risk of Experiencing Homelessness (Estimate Detail by Data Source) Table later in this report, 2020.

<sup>21</sup> Arizona Revises Statutes 12-2451.

obtained, these young people still face barriers to permanent housing. There are few leasing projects operating in the local community for homeless youth and no site-based or semi-independent living opportunities for youth under the age of 18 experiencing homelessness in the region. Consequently, minor age youth must often return to family environments characterized by precarious stability or reside in crisis shelter programs for long periods of time until reaching the age of 18 and becoming eligible for the more robust youth service system available to young people ages 18-24. Complicating this further, there is currently no formal pathway for youth experiencing homelessness and receiving shelter services under the age of 18 to avoid an interruption in housing support upon their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday within the local Coordinated Entry framework. Given the lack of longer-term transitional housing opportunities for minor age youth and the uncertainty of continued housing support at the age of majority, young people's ability to succeed and progress in school settings is challenged by unstable and intermittent housing arrangements.

### **Community Assets**

Multiple community programs operate in the Tucson area and, to a lesser degree, in rural Pima County specifically aimed at meeting the unique needs of unaccompanied and pregnant and parenting minors. Youth On Their Own, a local dropout prevention program serving unaccompanied youth, serves nearly 2,000 minor age students experiencing and at risk of homelessness annually. The program provides monthly living stipends, student advocacy, educational support, and basic needs assistance to support housing stability and academic achievement. The local Safe Place program administered by Our Family Services provides around the clock crisis intervention, shelter entry, family reunification, and non-residential services using a network of convenience stores, public buses, youth

agencies, and local businesses as disbursed entry points to services.

The Arizona Department of Education and local schools are active participants in the YHDP initiative and three districts conduct Coordinated Entry assessment of students experiencing and at risk of experiencing homelessness, directly connecting them to the local housing priority list. Education liaisons are additionally designated within each agency delivering CoC Program services and offer a single point of contact for coordination with area schools. These existing partnerships offer fertile ground for strategies to improve resource linkage and better support youth under the age of 18.

### **Continued Improvement Strategies**

1. Improve coordination and collaboration among school faculty, McKinney-Vento Liaisons, youth service agencies, and CoC-funded programs' educational liaisons.
2. Establish crisis housing options for youth residing outside of the Tucson area.
3. Establish transitional housing services for unaccompanied and pregnant and parenting minors.
4. Leverage existing Safe Place network to improve service linkage for unaccompanied and pregnant and parenting youth.
5. Develop formal Coordinated Entry approach to connect minors experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness to appropriate diversion, housing, and supportive service interventions and/or establish a formal transfer process within the established Coordinated Entry framework for youth to transfer into the young adult or adult housing support system at the age of majority.
6. Improve coordination and collaboration between the youth homeless response system and publicly-funded physical and behavioral health providers through which the overwhelming majority of minor age youth experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness are currently identified.

## Resources and Supports Needed to Achieve Strategic Improvements

Financial resources represent the most significant need related to improving the community's safety net for unaccompanied and pregnant and parenting minors experiencing and at risk of homelessness. Diversion services for this population are almost entirely unfunded and crisis housing resources are limited to four Basic Center Program beds. Significant resources, beyond the capacity of the YHDP initiative are needed to expand diversion and family reunification practices, launch crisis and transitional housing programs serving urban and rural communities alike, and implement fully functioning multi-sector connections reaching into juvenile justice, secondary education, and behavioral health venues.

## PREGNANT AND PARENTING YOUTH



Local data analysis indicates that parenting youth account for 26% of the overall population of youth ages 18-24 receiving services recorded in the local HMIS<sup>22</sup>. This number is even greater when considering the number of pregnant youth served through the youth homelessness response system; however, pregnancy data is currently reported only by programs funded through the U.S. Department

of Health and Human Services Runaway and Homeless Youth Program and is insufficient to produce an accurate prediction of the overall number of pregnant youth served through the system.

Local HMIS data and area health services, diversion programs, and child welfare and juvenile and adult justice systems shed additional light on the homeless experiences of pregnant and parenting youth<sup>23</sup>. According to these sources, an estimated 3% of youth under the age of 18 and 35% of youth ages 18-24 at risk of homelessness in Pima County are pregnant or parenting. Likewise, an estimated 8% of youth under the age of 18 and 22% of youth ages 18-24 experiencing homelessness in Pima County are pregnant and parenting. Given the disproportionately high rates of homelessness experienced by pregnant and parenting young people, it is essential that YHDP efforts center the experiences of these young people in all service models and elevate best practice to foster long-term success and prevent recurrent family homelessness.

### Unique Needs

Pregnant and parenting youth experiencing homelessness face numerous challenges. Primary among these are stresses that come with the expense and availability of child care, limited earning potential in the face of higher household expenses, limited parenting skills, and unfamiliarity with available health and family supportive services. Additionally, many adult-serving programs continue to provide segregated shelter environments that prohibit fathers or other male-identified caregivers from residing with their families creating a situation in which parenting couples and young fathers have limited options for shelter and are forced to choose between remaining in unsheltered or

<sup>22</sup> Tucson/Pima County FY18 Longitudinal System Analysis – Stella P (TPCH, 2019).

<sup>23</sup> Tucson/Pima County Annualized Estimates of the Number of Youth Experiencing or At Risk of Experiencing

Homelessness (Estimate Detail by Data Source) Table later in this report, 2020.

dangerous living situations until permanent housing or youth-dedicated housing services are available or separating their family.

Pregnant and parenting youth often face unique educational challenges, struggling to balance competing demands of child care and academic participation. Three local school districts utilize a two-generation approach to offer supportive educational environments for pregnant and parenting youth; however, the availability of such programs is not universal and often requires young people to change schools or districts in order to participate.

45% of pregnant and parenting youth reported that lack of child care prevents them from being able to pursue and achieve their education and employment goals.

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The existing homelessness response system is generally built to accommodate the needs of individuals with disabilities and persistent homelessness through permanent supportive housing and to accommodate families and individuals with less severe needs through rapid rehousing and transitional housing resources. Although families have equal access to permanent supportive housing resources, few of these programs are provided by organizations with experience and expertise related to the unique issues associated with family homelessness in general and even fewer possess expertise as it relates to the

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<sup>24</sup>TPCH Homeless Youth Needs Assessment, LeCroy & Milligan Associates, 2019.

interconnected challenges of homelessness among pregnant and parenting youth on their own.

### Community Assets

Local youth housing and supportive service providers have developed formal and informal partnerships with education, workforce, child care, early childhood development, and healthcare programs to meet the unique needs of pregnant and parenting youth. Specialized housing services, while insufficient to meet the overwhelming need for comprehensive services for pregnant and parenting youth in the community, are in place and provide models for replication and proven strategies that can be incorporated into the YHDP's targeted universalism approach to housing and supportive services.

Through Federal Runaway and Homeless Youth funds, Our Family Services provides Transitional Living Program services for pregnant and parenting couples using a tenant-based rental assistance model. Federally-funded Maternity Group Home services are available for single young mothers and their children using a tenant-based rental assistance model at Our Family Services and a host home model at Arizona Youth Partnership. Specialized approaches to serving pregnant and parenting youth are embedded into each organization's overall service array and comprehensive parenting skills, child/family health, and other supportive service linkages are coordinated through program partnerships.

The Tucson Unified, Marana Unified, and Sunnyside Unified School Districts offer specialized Teenage Parent Programs that offer supportive two-generation classroom environments allowing young parents to complete high school education, develop life

and parenting skills, access child and parent health resources, and connect to available mainstream benefits as needed. These programs are commonly utilized by young parents experiencing homelessness and housing instability supported by formal and informal partnerships between these specialized educational resources and local youth housing and service programs.



*Parenting group at Arizona Youth Partnerships' Starting Out Right program for pregnant and parenting youth.*

TPCH has an established agreement with Child-Parent Centers through which children experiencing homelessness are prioritized for Head Start and Early Head Start services as permissible within the agency's points-based prioritization approach. This partnership is bolstered through professional education and training offerings related to Head Start, Early Head Start, and early childhood development topics.

### **Continued Improvement Strategies**

1. Expand availability of crisis housing resources for young families and advocate for more flexible family shelter models designed to keep families intact within the adult homelessness response system.
2. Develop and strengthen partnerships with mainstream child care programs offered

through Arizona Department of Economic Security.

3. Refine Coordinated Entry processes to intentionally connect youth with moderate service needs to the most appropriate housing intervention from available host home, single site transitional housing, scattered-site transitional housing, and rapid rehousing options based on need and participant choice.

### **Resources and Supports Needed to Achieve Strategic Improvements**

Strengthened partnerships in the form of improved service coordination, resource linkage, and co-enrollment strategies can be actualized as a strategy toward maximizing existing resources. Additional funding is needed to expand child care subsidies to youth who are not enrolled in high school and/or are ineligible for State-funded child care subsidies, as well to expand crisis housing options for young families.

### **YOUTH INVOLVED IN JUSTICE AND CHILD WELFARE SYSTEMS**

Local data indicates that involvement in the child welfare and juvenile/adult justice systems is strongly correlated and a potential predictor for risk of homelessness. In fact, the 2019 Homeless Youth Needs Assessment conducted by TPCH revealed that 22% of young survey respondents experiencing homelessness identified issues with child welfare involvement as the cause of their homelessness<sup>25</sup>. Likewise, 47% of youth ages 18-24 who sought housing assistance through the local Coordinated Entry system in Calendar Year 2019 reported law enforcement contact of some kind in the prior six months and 23%

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<sup>25</sup> TPCH Homeless Youth Needs Assessment, LeCroy & Milligan Associates, 2019.

reported having spent at least one night in juvenile detention, jail, or prison during the same six-month period.

While much has been done within the juvenile justice, adult justice, and child welfare systems to prevent institutional exits to homelessness in recent years, the Continuum of Care has done little to formally participate or aid in these efforts. There is considerable opportunity for improved system coordination and greater success in preventing youth homelessness and pro-actively responding to youth exiting to unstable or dangerous situations which leave them vulnerable to homelessness. This opportunity is most pronounced within the juvenile justice system where there has been little coordination prior to YHDP planning initiatives.

### **Unique Needs**

Youth involved in the juvenile justice, adult justice, and child welfare systems face unique challenges to long-term stability. Many have experienced considerable trauma requiring trauma-informed services to heal from and overcome prior abuses, exploitation, and other risk factors. Few have the natural family bonds on which their peers often rely for guidance, support, and a safety net during early adulthood. Frequent changes in schools and inconsistent attendance often experienced by system-involved young people can result in lower educational attainment, social isolation, and gaps in pro-social support networks, all of which put youth leaving these environments at high risk of housing instability and lessened quality of life. They are often at elevated risk of exploitation and predation leading to further trauma, justice involvement, and barriers to employment.

Youth exiting custody require unique on-going supports that are often beyond the scope of the youth homelessness response system and their success hinges on strong collaborative partnerships, particularly in the area of discharge planning, to create a bridge between

care and stable housing. The continued strategies identified below are specifically intended to continue to forge and strengthen these partnerships to mitigate risk of homelessness, prevent exits to homelessness, and support the long-term success of young people with histories of justice and child welfare involvement.

### **Community Assets**

Efforts toward greater collaboration to improve outcomes for youth exiting justice and child welfare systems are underway and offering initial evidence of success. TPCH currently participates in weekly jail population review sessions conducted by Pima County's Criminal Justice Reform Unit and provides information and tools to link non-violent offenders to housing and service supports. These sessions provide a collaborative community forum involving area providers and prosecutors from the Pima County Attorney's Office, as well as the Pima County Public Defender with the aim of reducing jail time for non-violent offenses and increasing institutional exits to stable housing and appropriate supportive services. Since January 2019, 71 youth ages 18-24 identified as exiting to homelessness have participated in the program.

Through YHDP planning, Tucson Pima Collaboration to End Homelessness is also partnering with the Juvenile Justice Coalition, an initiative of the Pima County Juvenile Courts Center, as well as the United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona's Youth on the Rise initiative which incorporates juvenile justice re-integration and re-entry strategies into its community-level cradle to career network. Both entities are formal partners on the YHDP and will be participating in YHDP Change Teams to bolster these emerging partnerships and inform collaborative processes to prevent and end youth homelessness.



*Goodwill Metro Re-Engagement Center.*

The local child welfare system has also done considerable work to prevent exits to homelessness and improve long-term housing, safety, and stability outcomes for youth exiting foster care. In 2016, Arizona Governor Doug Ducey launched a state-wide initiative to reduce the number of children and youth in out of home care by increasing family-based supportive services and focusing on kinship care and other natural support alternatives to traditional out of home placements. This initiative has produced significant results with an overall reduction of 23.5% in the number of young people residing in out of home care through the child welfare system from State Fiscal Year 2016 to State Fiscal Year 2019<sup>26</sup>.

The Department of Child Safety has also recently re-engineered its voluntary services programs for youth ages 18-21 using an “opt-out” approach that arranges on-going care and subsidy for all youth in care beyond their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday unless the young person opts out of these services. This has reduced the frequency with which young people exit from care without safe, alternative housing and is intended to interrupt the pipeline from foster care to homelessness. The Department has also adopted a Housing First style approach to voluntary services which removes employment and education requirements for housing subsidy and employs progressive engagement strategies to encourage participation in

education, employment, and wraparound services aimed at improving long-term outcomes for youth.

The University of Arizona’s Fostering Success Program has created a community on campus and resource center for youth with histories of child welfare involvement and unaccompanied homelessness. The center’s support structure provides peer-to-peer mentorship along with professional staff available for consultation and referrals to help students overcome individual barriers and achieve success within and beyond the academic setting. The project assists with University applications and admissions, financial aid, Arizona Education and Training Vouchers, connections to campus and community resources, peer-based social activities, professional networking, self-advocacy education, and the challenges of navigating unfamiliar university processes.

### **Continued Improvement Strategies**

1. Continue participation in jail population review activities advocating for release of incarcerated youth to stable housing environments and mitigating the negative long-term effects of justice involvement.
2. Leverage YHDP diversion services and the participation of child welfare, juvenile justice, and adult justice partners in YHDP Change Teams to develop and refine formal discharge coordination strategies and pro-actively respond to youth exiting custody.
3. Cultivate partnerships between the Youth Action Committee, Youth on the Rise Youth Leadership Committee, and other youth-led coalitions and working groups to amplify youth voice within advocacy and

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<sup>26</sup> Arizona Department of Child Safety, Fiscal Year 20 Monthly Operational Outcomes Reports – February 2020.

system reform initiatives positively impacting youth in custody.

4. Expand availability of comprehensive, trauma-informed housing navigation and supportive services that are responsive to the unique needs of youth with histories of involvement in justice and child welfare systems.
5. Encourage participation in educational opportunities provided through area high schools, GED programs, Pima Community College, University of Arizona, and career/technical education programs.

### **Resources and Supports Needed to Achieve Strategic Improvements**

Financial resources, long-term partner commitments, and cross-training are needed to improve services and outcomes for youth exiting the juvenile justice, adult justice, and child welfare systems. Financial resources are needed to expand navigation, diversion, and rapid resolution strategies aimed at preventing homelessness among this population. Greater system coordination supported by cross-training and sustained opportunities for collaboration and networking among youth-serving professionals working in child welfare, juvenile justice, adult justice, and the youth homelessness response system is necessary to promote greater understanding of available resources and improved coordination and resource connection at service delivery points.

## **SURVIVORS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

Our Family Services and the Office of Sex Trafficking Intervention Research at Arizona

State University have partnered since 2014 to conduct an on-going longitudinal study of sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation among youth experiencing homelessness in Pima County. In recent years, the study has been expanded to include labor trafficking. Through the *Youth Experiences Survey* research project, an annual survey is administered with youth experiencing homelessness which illuminates common experiences, patterns in trafficking and exploitation, and correlations between these experiences and other risk factors. The research is used to inform local service planning and delivery, and to increase awareness and community response to the unique challenges of exploited and trafficking young people.

The sixth edition of the study<sup>27</sup>, published in 2019, found that 33% of survey respondents reported experiences of sex trafficking exploitation and 37% reported labor trafficking exploitation. Overall, 38% of youth reported at least one form of trafficking and 26% reported experiencing both sex and labor trafficking. An overwhelming 56% reported that their first sex trafficking experience occurred under the age of 18 and 78% of youth reporting sex trafficking experiences reported the presence of a trafficker in their lives.

### **Unique Needs**

The risk of sex trafficking is notably impacted by gender and sexual orientation. Forty percent of female identified youth reported sex trafficking experiences compared to 24% of male identified youth. While the small sample size limits reliability of data regarding transgender, gender non-binary, gender-non-conforming, and two-spirit youth, 50% of these young people reported sex trafficking experiences, indicating significant need for

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<sup>27</sup> *Youth Experiences Survey – Tucson Report, Arizona State University of Sex Trafficking Intervention Research, 2019.*

further investigation and more culturally-responsive strategies to mitigate risk to predation and help survivors recover from these traumatic experiences.

38% of youth experiencing homelessness who participated in Arizona State University's 2019 Youth Experiences Survey reported histories of sex or labor trafficking. More than half (56%) were trafficked before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Sex trafficking experiences are strongly correlated with self-harm behaviors, histories of child welfare and justice involvement, behavioral health challenges, and substance abuse. The correlation between behavioral health, substance abuse, and sex trafficking is most pronounced among LGBTQ+ youth. Young sex and labor trafficking survivors often experience unique legal challenges and require assistance addressing citizenship issues, obtaining judicial set asides for prior convictions, and navigating child support, custody, and other family law matters. Histories of abuse and exploitation present challenges to pro-social development, healthy relationships, and coping strategies. Trauma-informed therapeutic services, social resources, substance abuse treatment, and other services are often need to help young people from the traumas of exploitation and re-envision their lives with opportunity and positivity.

### **Community Assets**

A variety of human trafficking services exist in the local community and include dedicated services for young people fleeing or with histories of labor trafficking, sex trafficking, and commercial sexual exploitation. The Arizona

Partnership to End Domestic Trafficking, in which Our Family Services was a key partner and led service delivery in Pima County, was one of three pilot demonstration programs funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in 2014 and continued until September 2019. The project provided case management, housing/service navigation, and specialized legal, educational, therapeutic, and wraparound supports for young survivors of trafficking experiencing homelessness in Pima County. While this project has since ended, it left a lasting imprint on local practices to address the common experiences of trafficking and exploitation among youth experiencing homelessness in the region. Partnerships and services formed through this project continue and include:

- No-cost legal services including direct representation for survivors to resolve legal issues related to child support and custody, parenting plans, immigration, and judicial set asides (expungement).
- Eight units of low-barrier, scattered-site shelter for youth who are fleeing trafficking experiences and/or have intensive service needs related to trafficking experiences.
- Specialized case management, behavioral health services, and advocacy tailored to the needs of young trafficking survivors.

Sex and labor trafficking issues are common topics of professional education for area youth providers and have included presentations by regional and national experts with focus on identification and screening, best practices in intervention and service delivery, and special legal needs and considerations, among others.

### **Continued Improvement Strategies**

1. Improve identification of youth fleeing and/or with prior experiences of sex and labor trafficking by adding evidence-based screening questions to YHDP project entry

and/or Coordinated Entry assessment data collection.

2. Expand provider training offerings to include more advanced and applied skill development related to best practices in program design and delivery of services to young survivors of human trafficking.
3. Expand availability of no-cost specialty legal services for youth with histories of trafficking.
4. Establish and incorporate standards of care related to human trafficking services

into the CoC's Written Standards with special consideration for projects serving young survivors.

### **Resources and Supports Needed to Achieve Strategic Priorities**

The primary resource needed to accomplish these aims are strengthened partnerships with law clinics, pro bono legal professionals, law enforcement, and training providers. Internal coordination within the CoC is also needed to develop and approve standards of care and to incorporate screening questions into existing data collection points, as appropriate.

# STATEMENT OF NEED

TPCH conducted a comprehensive homeless youth needs assessment between December 2018 and February 2019. The following statement of need is based on that research, along with an April 2019 analysis of gaps in housing and services for youth in Pima County conducted by OrgCode Consulting on behalf of TPCH. For the purposes of assessing the prevalence, characteristics, and needs of youth experiencing homelessness and housing instability in the region, a variety of primary and secondary data sources were used:

- A survey of 154 currently and recently homeless and unstably housed youth administered by street outreach, shelter, drop-in center, education, employment, and supportive housing program staff (survey instrument provided in Appendix).
- Key informant interviews conducted with 13 youth system stakeholders representing housing, education, employment, justice, and other sectors.
- Youth Coordinated Entry pre-assessment data collected through administration of 1,293 Coordinated Entry pre-screening tools completed with unaccompanied and pregnant/parenting youth ages 18-24 during calendar years 2017 and 2018.
- Historical Point in Time Count data.
- 2017-2018 system performance, youth outcome, and demographic data as reported to HUD in the TPCH Fiscal Year 2018 Longitudinal System Analysis.
- Current service utilization data for Continuum of Care, Emergency Solutions Grant, Runaway and Homeless Youth, and non-Federal youth programs accounted for within the local HMIS.

- Annual data trends as reported in the most recent Youth Experiences Survey.

Through the YHDP planning initiative, additional data sets were provided by the local workforce development system, community health centers, juvenile and adult justice systems, Medicaid housing services, local and state education agencies, and the state child welfare system to inform estimates of the number of unduplicated youth experiencing or at-risk of homelessness in Pima County provided in this Plan.

## Causes of Youth Homelessness

Youth survey respondents and focus group participants contributing to TPCH's 2019 homeless youth needs assessment identified three primary causes of their homeless experiences. These included:

1. Financial hardship including multi-generational poverty, family eviction, job loss, and lack of skills and education to obtain employment.
2. Experiences of abandonment, abuse, neglect, and/or family conflict and violence.
3. Being kicked out of family home for a variety of reasons, particularly common among LGBTQ+ youth who reported rejection as a result of their gender identity and/or sexual orientation.

These experiences were often compounded by histories of child welfare and/or justice involvement, and experiences of abuse and neglect were strongly correlated to other causes of youth homelessness including family and youth substance abuse and mental health concerns as well as being kicked out of family homes or leaving other housing (e.g. foster care) without alternative stable housing.

## ANNUALIZED ESTIMATES OF THE NUMBER OF YOUTH EXPERIENCING OR AT RISK OF EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

The following data tables represent the most comprehensive estimations of the prevalence of youth homelessness and near-homelessness conducted by TPCH to date and incorporate traditional housing and service data sets, along with the complementary health, justice, child welfare, and workforce development data previously referenced. Due to a change in the State reporting portal, Pima County schools were unable to provide data related to the number of students experiencing

or at risk of experiencing homelessness in the 2018-2019 school year and prior year data sets included youth in the foster care system. Given the high likelihood of duplication between youth potentially able to be reported by schools and those already reported by Youth On Their Own (dropout prevention) and El Rio Health Centers (health services), no assumptions regarding youth enrolled in secondary education are included in the annualized estimate. Youth identified as experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness by local education agencies will be incorporated into annual updates to the Coordinated Community Plan adjusting for appropriate duplication assumptions.

ANNUALIZED ESTIMATES OF THE NUMBER OF YOUTH EXPERIENCING OR AT RISK OF EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS IN PIMA COUNTY, 2020 (SUMMARY TABLE)	
Under Age 18, Unaccompanied Youth At Risk of Homelessness	371
Under Age 18, Pregnant/Parenting Youth At Risk of Homelessness	12
Under Age 18, Unaccompanied Youth Experiencing Homelessness	166
Under Age 18, Pregnant/Parenting Youth Experiencing Homelessness	14
Ages 18-24, Unaccompanied Youth At Risk of Homelessness	186
Ages 18-24, Pregnant/Parenting Youth At Risk of Homelessness	100
Ages 18-24, Unaccompanied Youth Experiencing Homelessness	792
Ages 18-24, Pregnant/Parenting Youth Experiencing Homelessness	226
Total Number of Unaccompanied Youth At Risk of or Experiencing Homelessness	1,515
Total Number of Pregnant/Parenting Youth At Risk of or Experiencing Homelessness	352
Total Number of Youth At Risk of Experiencing Homelessness	669
Total Number of Youth Experiencing Homelessness	1,198
Total Number of Youth At Risk of or Experiencing Homelessness	1,867

**TUCSON/PIMA COUNTY ANNUALIZED ESTIMATES OF THE NUMBER OF YOUTH EXPERIENCING OR AT RISK OF EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS (ESTIMATE DETAIL BY DATA SOURCE)**

Data Source	Collection Period	Youth Served	Experience	Under Age 18		Ages 18-24		Total Subpopulation by		Total
				Unaccompanied	Pregnant/Parenting	Unaccompanied	Pregnant/Parenting	Unaccompanied	Pregnant/Parenting	
Arizona Department of Child Safety (Child Welfare)	November 2018 to Oct 2019	Youth experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness and currently enrolled in public child welfare services.	Youth at risk of experiencing homelessness	1	0	12	0	13	0	13
			Youth experiencing homelessness	20	0	5	0	25	0	25
Arizona Complete Health - Coordinated Community Plan	November 2018 to October 2019	Youth with disabilities experiencing homelessness and served through Medicaid-funded behavioral health services	Youth at risk of experiencing homelessness	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	0
			Youth experiencing homelessness	13	2	94	3	107	5	112
<i>137 youth experiencing homelessness reported by Arizona Complete Health. Estimation above adjusted by -20% to account for estimated duplication between this and other data sources included in this table.</i>										
Pima County One-Stop (Workforce Development System)	January 2017 to December 2018	Youth experiencing homelessness and participating in training/employment services through Pima County One-Stop workforce development system.	Youth at risk of experiencing homelessness	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	0
			Youth experiencing homelessness	0	0	9	1	9	1	10
<i>28 youth experiencing homelessness reported by Pima County One-Stop over two-year period. Estimation above adjusted by -50% to establish annual estimate and by -30% to account for estimated duplication between this and other data sources included in this table.</i>										

Youth On Their Own	July 2018 to June 2019	Students identified as experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness through dropout prevention services for unaccompanied youth on their own.	Youth at risk of experiencing homelessness	155	12	38	41	193	53	246
			Youth experiencing homelessness	90	12	97	32	187	44	231
<i>254 youth experiencing homelessness reported by Youth On Their Own. Estimation above adjusted by -15% to account for estimated duplication between this and other data sources included in this table.</i>										
Pima County Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS)	November 2018 to October 2019	Youth experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness reported in the TPCCH Homelessness Management Information System.	Youth at risk of experiencing homelessness	0	0	27	29	27	29	56
			Youth experiencing homelessness	26	0	512	185	538	185	723
Pima County Juvenile Court Centers	January 2019 to November 2019	Minor age youth issued runaway juvenile status offense warrants.	Youth at risk of experiencing homelessness	187	N/A	2	N/A	189	0	189
			Youth experiencing homelessness	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	0
Pima County Criminal Justice Reform Unit	January 2019 to November 2019	Youth identified as experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness through Safety + Justice Challenge and Pima Housing First Pilot Project adult justice reform initiatives.	Youth at risk of experiencing homelessness	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	0
			Youth experiencing homelessness	N/A	N/A	14	0	14	0	14
<i>71 youth experiencing homelessness reported by Pima County CJRU. Estimation above adjusted by -80% to account for estimated duplication between this and other data sources included in this table.</i>										

Marana Health Center	January 2018 to November 2019	Youth identified as experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness receiving physical or behavioral health services.	Youth at risk of experiencing homelessness	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
			Youth experiencing homelessness	1	0	14	0	15	0	15
<p><i>1 youth at risk of experiencing homelessness and 38 youth experiencing homelessness reported by Marana Health Center. Estimations above adjusted by -50% to establish annual estimate and by 20% to account for estimated duplication between this and other data sources included in this table.</i></p>										
El Rio Community Health Center	January - November 2019	Youth self-reporting as experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness receiving physical or behavioral health services.	Youth at risk of experiencing homelessness	28	0	106	30	134	30	164
			Youth experiencing homelessness	16	0	47	5	63	5	68
<p><i>1,723 youth at risk of homelessness and youth at risk of experiencing homelessness and 582 youth experiencing homelessness reported by El Rio Health Center. Under Age 18 estimations above adjusted by -95% based on assumption that 5% of doubled-up youth are unaccompanied; Ages 18-24 estimations above adjusted by -60% to account for estimated duplication between this and other data sources included in this table.</i></p>										

## YOUTH DATA AND DEMOGRAPHICS

### Point-in-Time Count

Since 2005, HUD has required all CoCs to complete the Point-in-Time (PIT) count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on a single night in January. This count is completed annually in Pima County during the last week of January and includes a street count of unsheltered homeless persons in addition to a count of all persons sheltered in emergency and transitional beds. The 2018 PIT count identified a total of 1,380 homeless individuals in Pima County, of whom 104 (8%) were unaccompanied youth under age 18 or young adults ages 18 to 24. Exhibit 1 shows PIT count data for total homeless persons and unaccompanied youth and young adults in from 2015 to 2018. A general trend is that the number of total persons counted has decreased steadily over time, however the number of unaccompanied youth has not decreased in the same pattern, suggesting that unaccompanied homeless youth remains a need to be addressed by the CoC.

The Point in Time Count provides an incomplete picture of youth homelessness in Pima County. While fewer than 200 youth were counted in 2019 Point in Time Count, between 500 and 800 unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness seek housing assistance through the TPCCH Coordinated Entry system annually.

Exhibit 1. Count of Total Persons and Unaccompanied Youth and Young Adults in Tucson/Pima County CoC, 2015-2018 PIT Counts

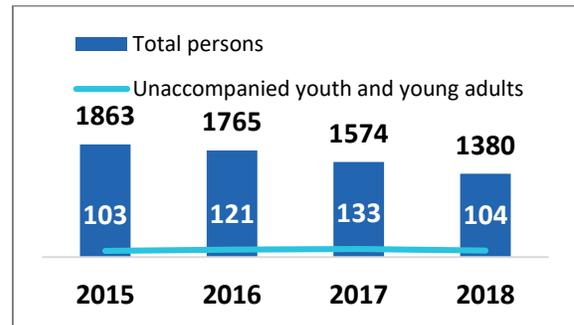


Exhibit 2 shows the gender identity of unaccompanied youth and young adults in the 2018 PIT count. Two thirds identified as cisgender male, while about a third identified as cisgender female. A small proportion of young people counted in 2018 identified as transgender or gender non-conforming.

Exhibit 2. Gender Identity of Unaccompanied Youth and Young Adults, 2018 PIT Count

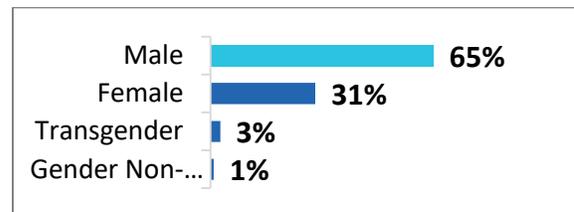
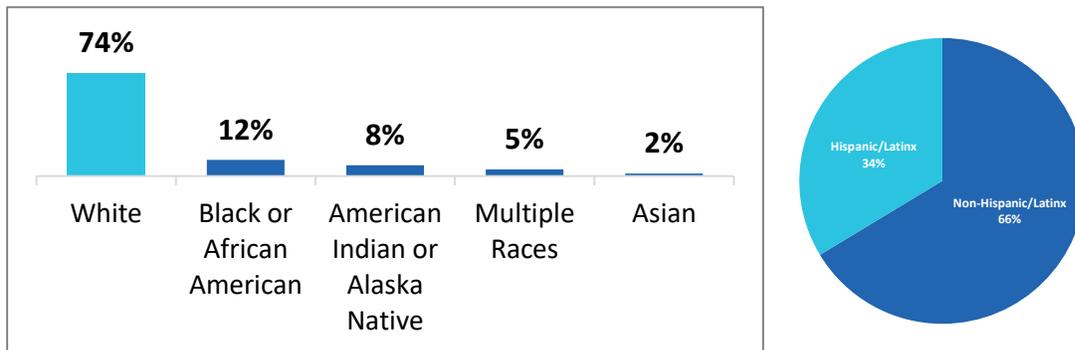


Exhibit 3 shows that during the 2018 PIT count, 74% of unaccompanied youth and young adults identified as White, followed by 12% who identified as Black or African American, 8% who identified as Native American/American Indian, and 5% as mixed race. Additionally, 34% identified Hispanic/Latinx. In comparison, 2018 U.S. Census Bureau population estimates for Pima County shows that 85.1% are White, 4.3% are Native American, 4.1% are Black or African American, 3.3% are Asian, 2.9% are two or more races, and 37.3% are Hispanic/Latinx.

Exhibit 3. Race and Ethnicity of Unaccompanied Youth/Young Adults, 2018 PIT Count



**Vulnerability Index Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) Data**

Exhibit 4 shows the number of youth and young adults ages 17 to 24 who completed the TPCH’s common assessment tool in 2017, 2018, and combined. The tool used by the TPCH is the Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT), which is used for adults experiencing homelessness. Additional versions of the tool

include the Family (F-VI-SPDAT), which is a family-specific assessment completed when a family of two or more adults and/or children seeks services, or the Transition Age Youth (TAY-VI SPDAT), which is the assessment specific for youth ages 18 to 24. Because of the large number of Coordinated Entry assessors in the CoC, youth are commonly assessed using an incorrect version of the VI-SPDAT resulting in referrals to program interventions which are not appropriate to their needs.

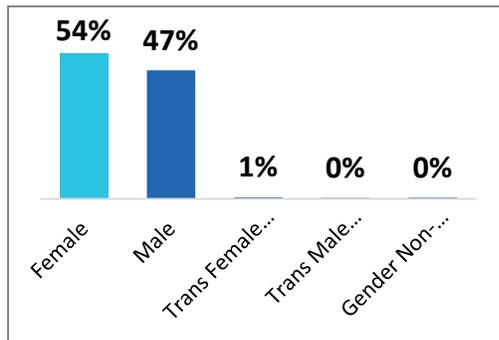
Exhibit 4. VI-SPDAT Breakdown by Age and Type in 2017, 2018, and Combined

SPDAT	CALENDAR YEAR 2017				CALENDAR YEAR 2018				CY 2017 & 2018 COMBINED						
	F	TAY	VI	COMBINED	F	TAY	VI	COMBINED	F	TAY	VI	COMBINED			
<b>Total</b>	144	334	269	747	108	254	184	546	252	588	453	1,293			
<b>17</b>	0	0	0	0	0%	0	1	0	1	0%	0	1	0	1	0%
<b>18</b>	14	2	18	34	5%	6	56	6	68	12%	20	58	24	102	8%
<b>19</b>	16	77	27	120	16%	11	34	13	58	11%	27	111	40	178	14%
<b>20</b>	18	58	40	116	16%	11	43	25	79	14%	29	101	65	195	15%
<b>21</b>	34	53	47	134	18%	25	27	18	70	13%	59	80	65	204	16%
<b>22</b>	37	43	49	129	17%	17	23	29	69	13%	54	66	78	198	15%
<b>23</b>	35	30	59	124	17%	17	37	38	92	17%	52	67	97	216	17%
<b>24</b>	17	41	29	87	12%	21	33	55	109	20%	38	74	84	196	15%

Exhibit 5 shows the gender identity of youth (ages 17 to 24) who completed any of the three VI-SPDAT assessment types in 2017 and 2018 combined. While most of the youth identified as either cisgender male or female, 1% (n=16) of

respondents identified as either transgender or gender non-conforming. Cisgender females (54%, n=692) accounted for the majority of young people who completed an assessment in these two years.

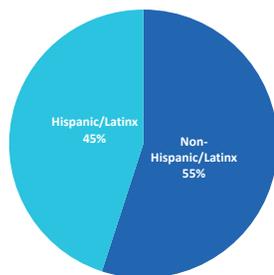
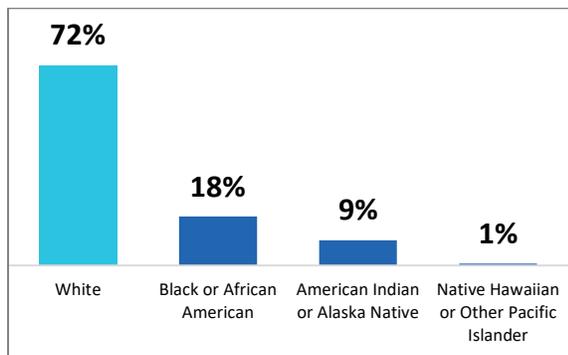
Exhibit 5. Gender Identity of Youth who Completed a VI-SPDAT in 2017 and 2018, Combined



Percentages exceed 100% as potential duplication existed for youth who completed separate assessments in each calendar year.

Exhibit 6 shows that 72% (n=936) youth who completed the VI-SPDAT in 2017 and 2018 identified as White, followed by 18% who identified as Black/African American, and 9% who identified as Native American/American Indian. Moreover, 45% (n=588) identified as Hispanic/Latinx.

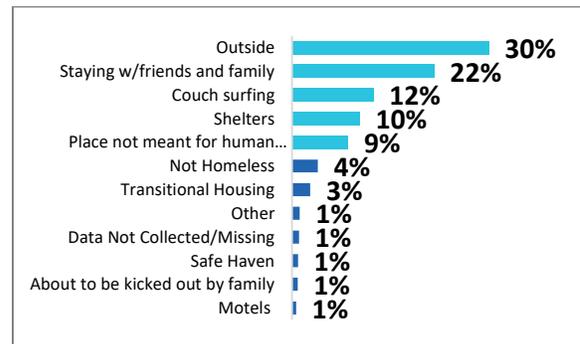
Exhibit 6. Race and Ethnicity of Youth who Completed a VI-SPDAT in 2017 and 2018, Combined



Percentages do not total to 100% because youth could select more than one option that applied to them.

The VI-SPDAT assessments capture where youth are primarily sleeping before housing interventions are offered. Exhibit 7 shows that in 2017 and 2018, most young people experiencing homelessness either slept outside (30%, n=389), stayed with friends and family (22%, n=281), couch surfed (12%, n=161), stayed in a shelter (10%, n=134), or another place not meant for human habitation (9%, n=111).

Exhibit 7. Location Where Youth Sleeps Most Frequently, 2017 and 2018 Combined



## 2017-2018 VI-SPDAT Youth Data

73% of youth reported emotional, physical, psychological, sexual abuse, or trauma to be the cause of their homelessness.

49% have been to the ER in the last 6 months.

37% are currently involved with the legal system.

34% have been attacked or beaten up since becoming homeless.

29% have tried to harm themselves or others since being homeless.

24% are not able to meet their basic needs – bathing, clean clothes, food/water.

23% report difficulty maintaining housing due to mental health.

## YOUTH DEDICATED HOUSING

Exhibit 8. Number of Beds Available in Youth Dedicated Housing Programs

Housing Type	Transitional Housing	Rapid Rehousing	Permanent Supportive Housing	Emergency Shelter*	Total
Number of beds dedicated to pregnant and parenting youth	53	0	23	0	76
Number of beds dedicated to unaccompanied youth	19	16	35	12	82
<b>Total Youth Dedicated Beds</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>158</b>

\*8 youth dedicated Emergency Shelter beds can be accessed by unaccompanied and/or pregnant and parenting youth.

### Youth Dedicated Housing Programs

Exhibit 8 shows the number of beds available in youth dedicated housing programs in 2020. A total of 158 beds are dedicated for youth experiencing homelessness in the region. Youth ages 18-24 are also eligible for and frequently receive Coordinated Entry referrals to adult housing services that are not specifically designated for youth.

### Utilization of Youth Dedicated Housing Programs

Data on housing program service utilization of unaccompanied youth (ages 12-17 years) and young adults (ages 18-24 years) during the time frame of 7/1/2017 - 6/30/2018 was analyzed. TPCCH maintains a formal agreement with Pima County to administer its centralized Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS). HMIS data is reported in aggregate by youth dedicated program type

below. While program level data represents unduplicated individuals, total numbers across programs likely represent duplicate counts of individuals who have utilized more than one service during this time frame. Therefore, aggregated data across all programs is not reported.

Exhibit 9 shows the total number of unaccompanied young adults, youth, and children (of parenting young adults) who received services from youth dedicated housing programs during this time frame. Youth street outreach encountered the highest number of people served by program type, which is to be expected as these young people are re-connected with family or referred to housing programs, with the goal of establishing permanent housing stability. It should be noted that while there were no youth-dedicated rapid rehousing projects reported in HMIS during the period, two rapid rehousing projects for youth have since been implemented locally.

Exhibit 9. Unaccompanied Young Adults, Youth, and Children Served by Youth Dedicated Programs, HMIS Data 7/1/2017 - 6/30/2018

Age Range	Street Outreach	Transitional Housing	Permanent Supportive Housing	Emergency Shelter
18-24 Years*	229	68	53	17
12-17 Years	4	1	3	36
< 5 Years (children of parenting youth and young adults)	55	38	13	4
<b>Total Individuals Served</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>57</b>

\*18-24-year-old counts include youth who turned 25 during program participation.

Exhibit 10 shows the gender identity of youth and young adults who were served by the four program types. The majority of young people served identified as cisgender male or female, with a small percentage identifying as transgender female (male to female), transgender male (female to male), or gender non-conforming. Over half of young people served by youth dedicated street outreach and transitional housing programs were female, while over half of those served by permanent supportive housing projects and emergency shelters were male.

Exhibit 10. Gender Identity of Youth and Young Adults by Youth Dedicated Programs

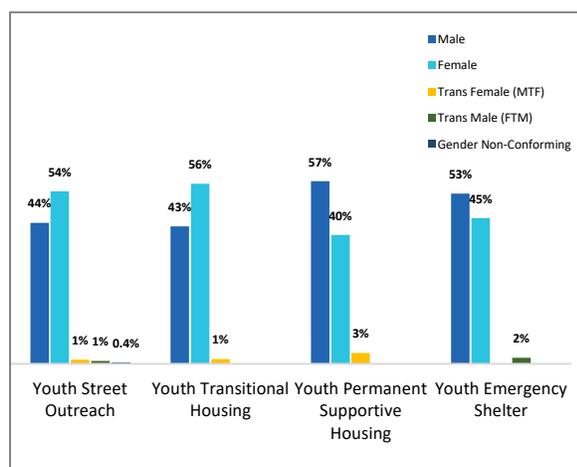
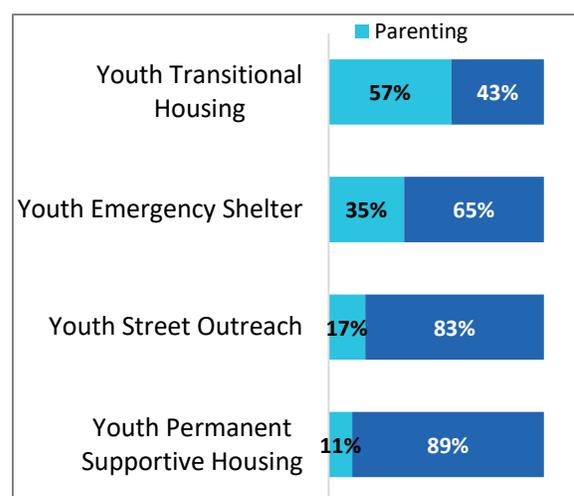


Exhibit 11 shows the percentage of young adults ages 18-24 who are parenting by youth dedicated services (none of the young people ages 12-17 were reported in HMIS to be parenting). Youth dedicated transitional housing programs served the highest proportion of young adults (57%) who were parenting children under the age of five years, which reflects that these programs specifically focus resources on housing parenting youth. In all program types, the majority of parenting young adults served are female.

Exhibit 11. Percentage of Parenting Youth Ages 18-24 by Youth Dedicated Programs



## 2019 HOMELESS YOUTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT YOUTH SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

Over a twelve-month period, youth experienced between **1 and 9 different homeless or unstable housing situations**, with an average of two different situations.

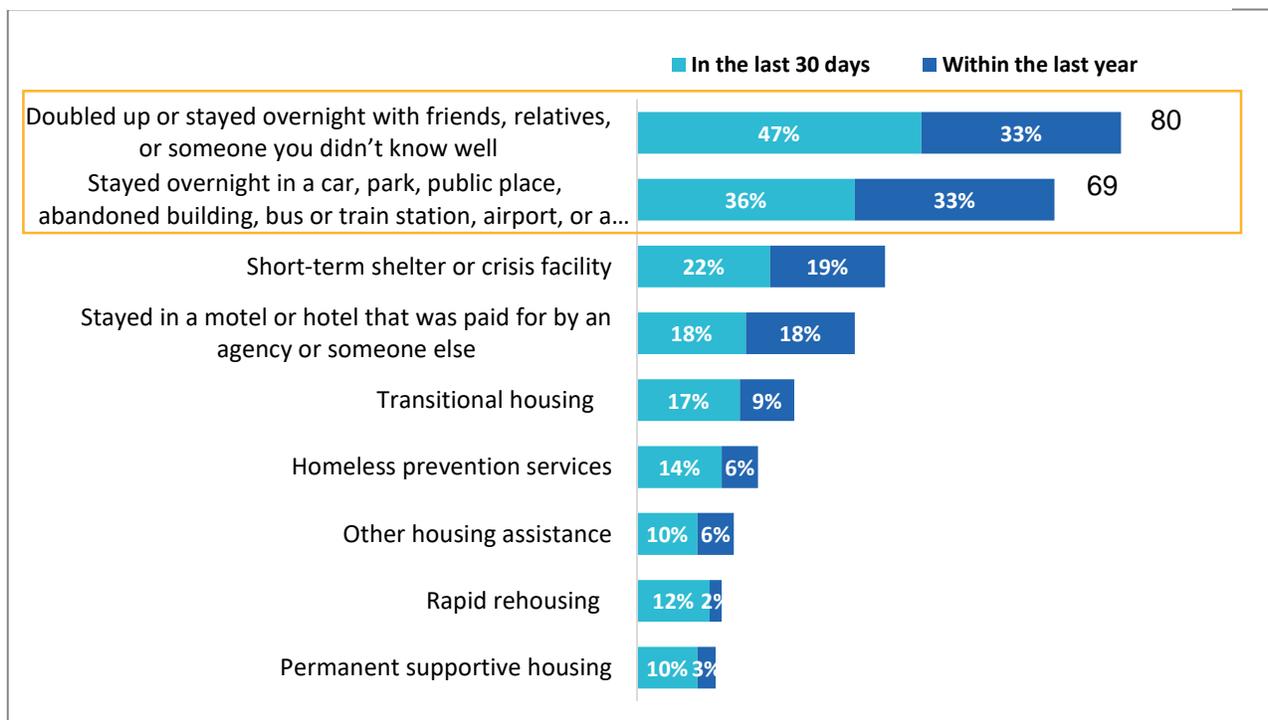
### Homelessness and Unstable Housing Situations

Youth surveyed were asked if they had experienced specific living situations because they “did not have a regular, adequate, and safe place to stay at night” in the last 30 days, not in the last 30 days but within the last year, or if it did not apply to them. Most (90%, n=139) of youth surveyed had experienced between one and seven different homeless or unstable housing situations in the last 30 days, with an

average of two different situations experienced. These experiences routinely reflected youth moving between HUD Category 1, 2, and 4 homeless definitions over short periods of time.

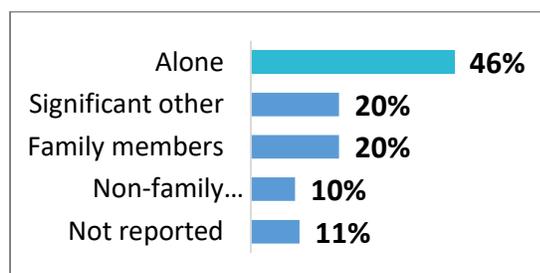
Exhibit 12 shows the percentage of youth who experienced each type of living situation in the last 30 days or within the last year, sorted by the total percentage of youth who experienced the situation in either time frame. The living situations reported by survey respondents are consistent with those reported by youth on the VI-SPDAT in 2017 and 2018 (see Exhibit 4) and are consistent with national data on youth homelessness. The most common situation experienced by 80% (n=122) of youth in the last 30 days or within the last year was doubling up or staying overnight with friends, relatives, or someone they did not know well because they did not have a regular, adequate, and safe place to stay at night. Additionally, 69% (n=106) of youth reported having stayed overnight in a car, park, public place, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or a similar place because they did not have a regular, adequate, safe place to stay.

Exhibit 12. Youth Homeless or Unstable Housing Situations in the Last 30 Days or Within the Last Year



Youth surveyed were asked who they were homeless with, as well as if they are pregnant and/or parenting. Exhibit 13 shows that almost half of youth (46%, n=71) reported being homeless by themselves, and 20% each reported being homeless with family members (n=32) or a significant other (n=31). Youth were able to select all the options that applied to their situation, so the percentages do not total to 100%.

*Exhibit 13. Others with Whom Youth are Homeless and Pregnant/Parenting Status*

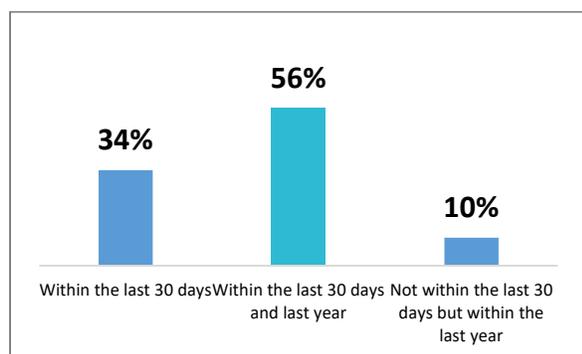


*Percentages do not total to 100% because youth could select more than one option.*

### Homelessness Frequency and Duration

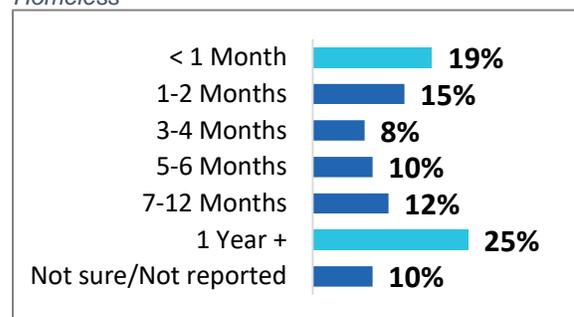
Looking at the length of time youth experienced homelessness, Exhibit 14 shows that 34% (n=53) of youth experienced one or more homeless situations only in the last 30 days; over half (56%, n=86) experienced one or more situations in the last 30 days and within the last year; and 10% (n=15) experienced one or more situations within the last year, but not within the last 30 days.

*Exhibit 14. Time Frame of Youth Homelessness and Unstable Housing*



The average age when youth surveyed first became homeless was 16.7 years old (3.2 SD), with a wide range from 4-24 years old. Only 3% of youth (n=4) surveyed reported being homeless for the first time, while 97% (n=146) had been homeless 1 to 20 times before. Overall, youth surveyed have experienced homelessness an average of four times (3.8 SD) including their current situation. Exhibit 15 shows the length of their current homeless situation. The data shows a split between the two majority groups, with 19% (n=30) having recently become homeless and 25% (n=39) having been homeless for more than one year.

*Exhibit 15. Length of Time Youth Have Currently Been Homeless*



### Reasons for Youth Homelessness

Exhibit 16 shows the primary reasons why youth became homeless, categorized from the multiple choice and open-ended responses reported by youth. Most respondents (84%, n=130) indicated multiple reasons for their homelessness (providing an average of 5 reasons and a range of 2-19 reasons). Because youth could report more than one reason, the combined percentages do not total 100%. Specific responses are discussed further under each main category area below. The top reasons given by more than half of youth surveyed include: experiences of financial hardship including intergenerational poverty, family eviction, job loss, and lack of skills/education to obtain employment;

experiences of abuse, neglect, abandonment, and/or family conflict and violence; and/or having been kicked out of their family’s home for various reasons including rejection due to gender identity and/or sexual orientation. The reasons for youth homelessness reported through this survey are consistent with those identified nationally by the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. Given the diverse reasons for youth homelessness, TPOCH examined how demographic characteristics of youth, including age, ethnicity, LGBTQ+ identity, and pregnant/parenting status may be related to different causes. Significant findings are noted.

“Never in my wildest dreams did I think that I would move from being homeless to advocating for other youth in Washington D.C. We need more resources to end youth homelessness and I am proud that I got the chance to go to Congress and talk about it.”

*Youth Action Committee Member describing his 2019 visit to the United States Congress.*

Exhibit 16. Primary Reasons for Youth Homelessness

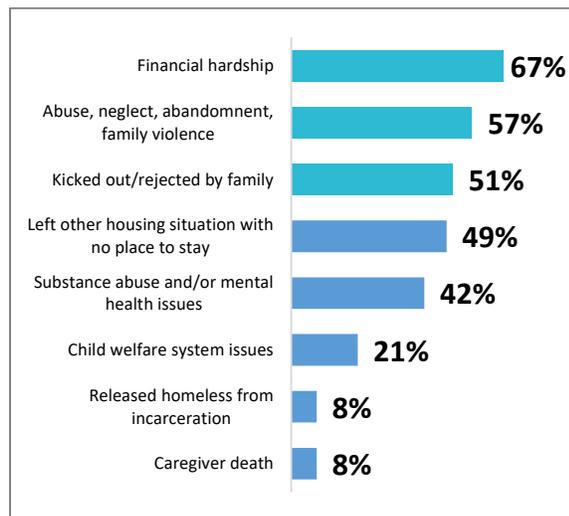


Exhibit 17 shows a Pearson’s Correlations matrix of reasons for youth homelessness. Each shaded box shows two reasons (in the column heading and row heading) for youth homeless and unstable housing that the survey data shows are significantly likely to co-occur. For example, having experienced abuse and neglect as a reason for youth homelessness was significantly related to other reasons for youth homelessness including: family and youth substance abuse and mental health issues; death of a caregiver; youth leaving other housing with no place to stay; youth being kicked out of their family’s home; and youth being released from incarceration with nowhere to go.

Exhibit 17. Correlations Between Identified Causes of Youth Homelessness

	Financial Hardship	Abuse, neglect, etc.	Kicked out/ Rejected by Family	Left Other Housing	Substance Abuse/ Health	Child Welfare Issues	Released from Incarceration	Caregiver Death
Financial Hardship	-							
Abuse, neglect, etc.		-						
Kicked out/Rejected by Family			-					
Left Other Housing				-				
Substance Abuse/ Health					-			
Child Welfare Issues						-		
Released from Incarceration							-	
Caregiver Death								-

Financial Hardship: The most commonly reported reason for youth homelessness, as given by 67% (n=103) of survey respondents, was experiencing some form of financial hardship related to intergenerational poverty and/or loss of or limited access to employment opportunities. This larger category includes both youth and family level financial hardship, with most youth reporting having experienced more than one type. Types of financial hardship related to intergenerational poverty that resulted in youth homelessness include:

- 50% (n=77) of youth could not support themselves financially;
- 29% (n=44) of families could not support the youth financially;
- 28% (n=43) of families were evicted from their home; and
- 4% (n=6) of youth reported in an open-ended comment that they either lost their job or were unemployed due to lack of skills and/or education.

Financial hardship was not significantly correlated to any of the other main reasons for youth homelessness, suggesting that for some youth it is a stand-alone reason for their homelessness and not related to other main reasons reported in the 2019 Needs Assessment. This survey finding is supported by key informant interviewed who cited family poverty or financial instability as a major factor for youth homelessness, with parents not being able to meet the basic needs or provide financial support for their children, youth, and young adults.

Abuse, Neglect, Abandonment, and Family Violence: Most unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness have significant experience with trauma. Youth often leave home because of multiple types of abuse and neglect, severe family conflict, and exposure to violence. Over half (57%, n=87) of young

people surveyed reported their homelessness or unstable housing situation occurred as a result of experiencing abuse, neglect, abandonment, and/or family conflict and violence. Types of abuse that respondents have experienced, with most having experienced more than one type include:

- 31% (n=47) experienced verbal abuse;
- 27% (n=42) were abandoned/neglected by their caregiver;
- 24% (n=37) did not feel safe at home;
- 23% (n=36) experienced physical abuse;
- 12% (n=19) experienced sexual abuse;
- 3% (n=4) experienced family violence and conflict in the home.

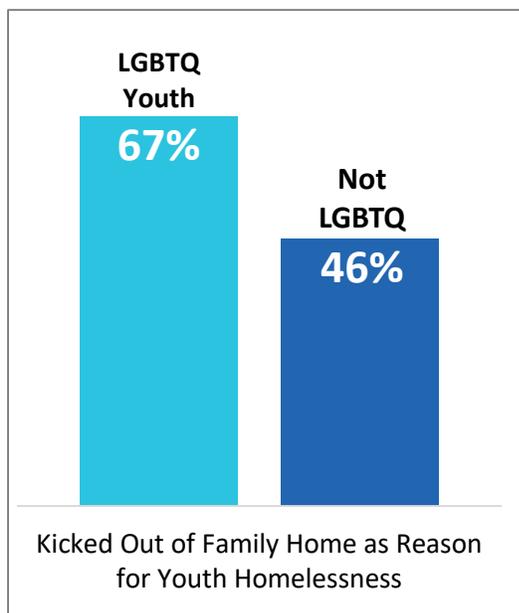
Having experienced abuse and neglect as a reason for youth homelessness was significantly correlated to other reasons for youth homelessness including: family and youth substance abuse and health issues (p=.00); caregiver death (p=.01); youth leaving other housing with no place to stay (p=.02); youth being kicked out of their family's home (p=.02); and youth being released from incarceration with nowhere to go (p=.03). This survey finding is supported by key informants interviewed who reported abuse, conflict, violence, or a "toxic environment" in the home as playing a major role youth homelessness.

Family Rejection: The third reason for youth homelessness, as reported by 51% (n=78) of survey respondents, was that they were kicked out of their family's home. Young adults between the ages of 18-24 (54%) were significantly more likely than youth under age 18 (26%) to have been kicked out of their family home ( $\chi^2=5.134$ , p=.02). Exhibit 18 shows that youth surveyed who identified as LGBTQ+ are significantly more likely to be homeless – 67% – because they were kicked out of their family

home, compared to 46% of youth surveyed who did not identify as LGBTQ+ and were homeless for this reason ( $\chi^2=4.311$ ,  $p=.04$ ).

Coming out at a young age is associated with increased risk for longer time spent homeless. LGBTQ+ youth often come out to significant negative reactions from their families and are rejected and put out of their homes as a result of sharing their sexual orientation or gender identity.

*Exhibit 18. LGBTQ+ Identity and Being Kicked Out of Family Home as Reason for Youth Homelessness*



Youth being kicked out of their family's home and/or rejected by their family, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, was significantly correlated to youth having experienced abuse, neglect, abandonment and/or family violence as a reason for their homelessness ( $p=.02$ ).

Leaving Housing Situations with No Safe Alternative Housing: Almost half of youth (49%,  $n=76$ ) reported that they became homeless because they left another housing/living situation without having a secure place to stay.

This larger category encompasses specific housing/living situations, including:

- 33% ( $n=57$ ) left their family's home as their own decision (e.g., the youth ran away);
- 16% ( $n=27$ ) recently moved to the Tucson/Pima County area from another location and did not have any place to stay;
- 10% ( $n=15$ ) exited a transitional or supportive housing program with nowhere to go.

Youth leaving other housing with no place to stay was significantly correlated to youth having experienced abuse, neglect, abandonment and/or family violence ( $p=.02$ ) and faced issues related to child welfare involvement as reasons for their homelessness ( $p=.00$ ).

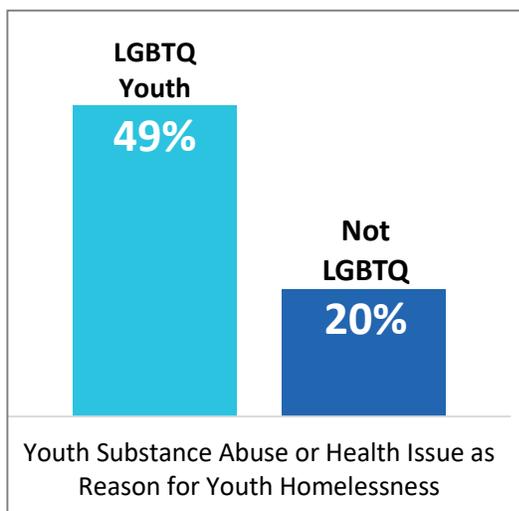
Substance Abuse and/or Health Issues: A total of 42% of youth ( $n=64$ ) reported that their homelessness was due to substance abuse and/or health issues faced by themselves and/or a family member. Specific reasons for youth homelessness related to this larger issue, with many youth reporting more than one reason, include:

- 20% ( $n=31$ ) of youth reported a mental or physical health issue;
- 15% ( $n=23$ ) of youth reported an alcohol or drug use disorder;
- 18% ( $n=28$ ) reported a caregiver with an alcohol or drug use disorder;
- 15% ( $n=23$ ) reported a caregiver with a mental or physical health issue;
- 5% ( $n=8$ ) of youth reported exiting a substance abuse or mental health treatment program with nowhere to go.

Exhibit 19 shows that youth surveyed who identified as LGBTQ+ are significantly more likely to be homeless – 49% – because of their own substance abuse issue or mental/physical health issue, compared to 20% of youth surveyed who did not identify as LGBTQ and were homeless for this reason ( $\chi^2=11.07$ ,  $p=.00$ ).

Youth homelessness due to substance abuse and mental health issues, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, was significantly correlated to youth homelessness due to experiencing abuse, neglect, abandonment and/or family violence ( $p=.00$ ); issues related to child welfare involvement ( $p=.00$ ); and death of their caregiver ( $p=.04$ ).

*Exhibit 19. LGBTQ+ Identity and Youth Substance Abuse/Health Issue as Reason for Youth Homelessness*



Child Welfare Involvement: Almost a quarter of youth (21%,  $n=33$ ) became homeless because of reasons related to being involved with the child welfare system, with many reporting more than one reason:

- 15% ( $n=23$ ) reported that they aged out or opted out of the child welfare system with nowhere to go.

- 14% ( $n=21$ ) faced issues with their child welfare placement that led them leave the placement with nowhere to go.

Youth homelessness related to child welfare involvement was significantly correlated to youth homelessness due to substance abuse and/or mental health issues ( $p=.01$ ); leaving other housing situations with nowhere to go ( $p=.00$ ); and death of their caregiver ( $p=.00$ ).

Justice Involvement: Youth released from detention or correctional facilities often do not have support networks or stable housing. Of the youth surveyed, 8% ( $n=13$ ) reported that they became homeless because they were released from jail or prison with nowhere to go. Youth homelessness due to incarceration release with nowhere to go was significantly correlated to youth homelessness due to experiencing abuse, neglect, abandonment and/or family violence ( $p=.03$ ).

Caregiver Death: Additionally, a low percentage of youth surveyed (8%,  $n=13$ ) reported that a reason for their homelessness was the death of their caregiver. Youth homelessness related to caregiver death was significantly correlated to youth homelessness due to leaving other housing situations with nowhere to go ( $p=.00$ ); experiencing abuse, neglect, abandonment and/or family violence ( $p=.01$ ); and substance abuse and/or mental health issues ( $p=.04$ ).

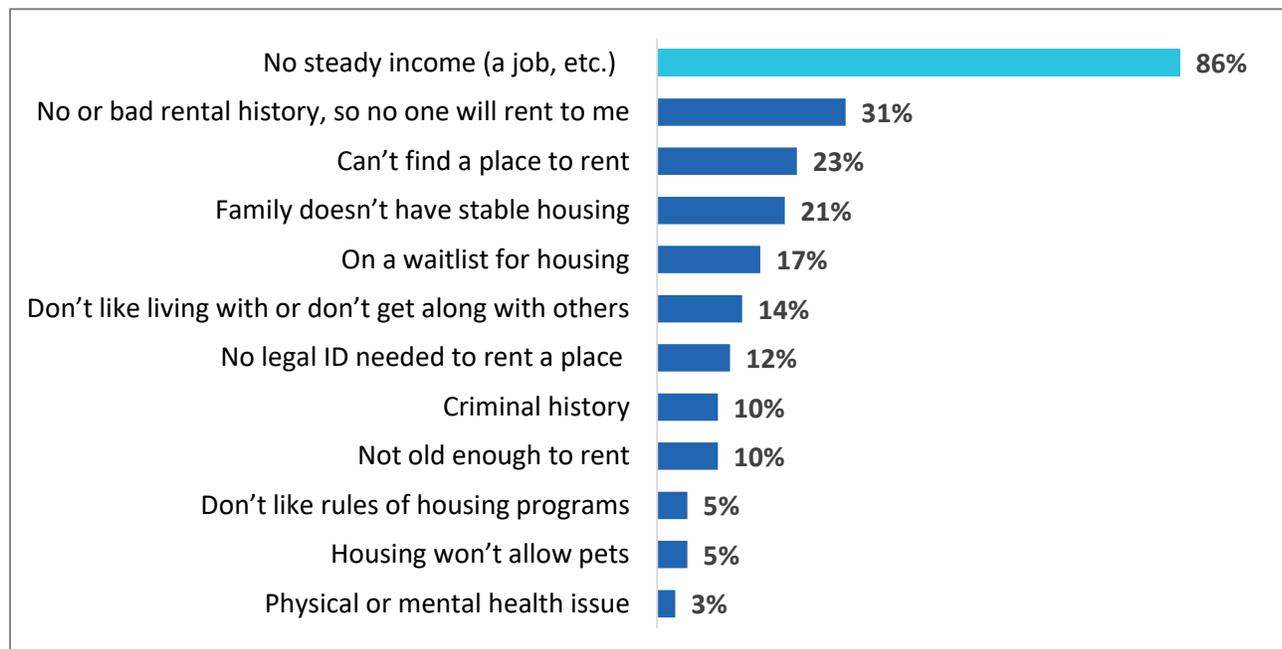
### **Barriers Preventing Stable and Permanent Housing**

According to youth survey data, the primary barrier that has prevented 86% ( $n=132$ ) of respondents from having stable or permanent housing is a lack of sufficient income, either from not having employment or not earning enough money from employment to cover housing costs (Exhibit 20). One respondent commented on the survey, “as a single parent of several children, I cannot afford to pay for a deposit, first and last month’s rent, and other

move-in costs.” Other common barriers are related to limited access to housing because respondents have no or poor rental history

(including bad credit history) or they cannot find a place to affordably rent.

Exhibit 20. Barriers Preventing Youth from Having Stable or Permanent Housing

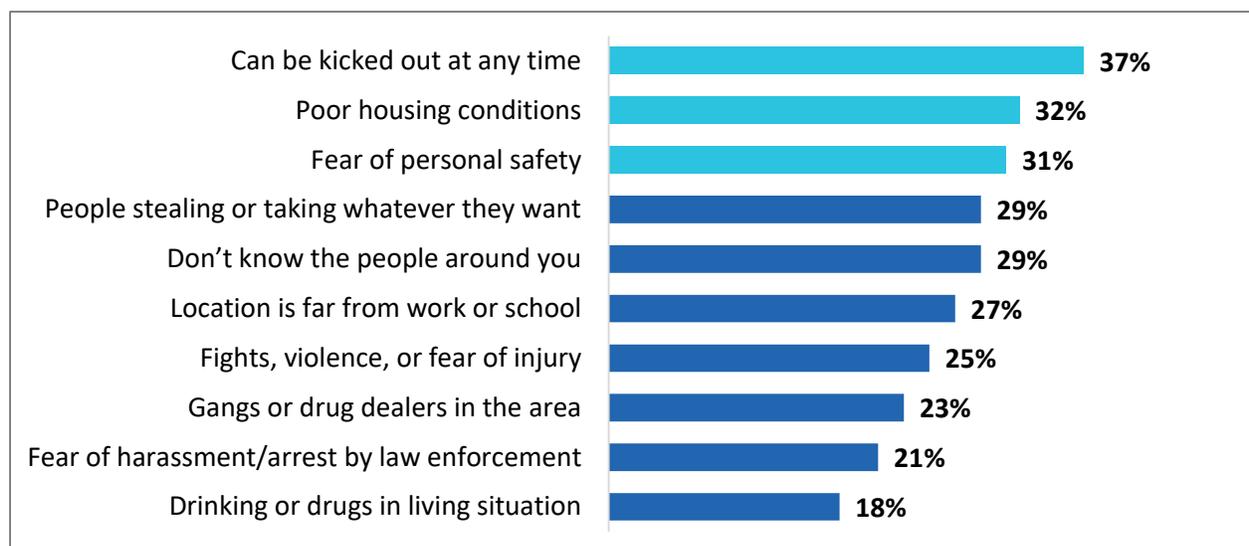


### Concerns with Current Living Situations

Exhibit 21 shows the common concerns that survey respondents reported having with their current living situation. Respondents could select all the options that applied to them as well as provide open-ended comments, with most respondents listing multiple concerns. The main concern shared by over a third of respondents (37%, n=57) was the lack of permanency of their current situation, fearing that they could be kicked out at any time. Nearly a third (32%, n=50) were concerned about poor housing conditions, including lack of cleanliness (e.g., in emergency housing), presence of pests (e.g., rats, cockroaches), unsecure living spaces (e.g., non-locking doors), and physical damage (e.g., broken windows, holes in wall). Additionally, nearly a

third (31%, n=48) expressed concerns for their personal safety and/or the safety of their children. Specific safety concerns included exposure to fights, violence, and fear of injury (25%, n=39), and fear of being sex trafficked (5%, n=8), sexually assaulted (11%, n=17), or killed (14%, n=21). Youth who identified as LGBTQ+ (55%, n=18) were significantly more likely to express concerns for their personal safety in their current living situation, specifically fear of being sexually assaulted (24% vs 7%,  $\chi^2=7.456$ ,  $p=.01$ ), than youth who identified as heterosexual and cisgender (46%, n=30) ( $\chi^2=10.698$ ,  $p=.00$ ). This finding is consistent with national data on the unique concerns facing LGBTQ+ homeless youth.

Exhibit 21. Concerns with Current Living Situation



### Service and Benefits Participation Among Youth Experiencing Homelessness

<p><b>Services Used to Meet Basic Needs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Services used in the past 90 days to meet basic needs included: transportation (67%) (e.g., access to a bus pass); access to food items (57%) (e.g., food boxes, snack packs, groceries); access to toiletries (53%) (e.g., body care products); receipt of clothing items (36%); and meals at community places (31%).</li> <li>Focus group participants generally reported that they are able to meet their food needs through snack packs, community food pantries, and food boxes.</li> <li>Regarding housing services used in the past 90 days, 29% have utilized longer-term housing services to stay for 6+ months; 28% stayed in short-term shelter or emergency housing; and 23% received financial assistance to get into housing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Services Used to Meet Health Care Needs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>74% of respondents receive Medicaid through the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS).</li> <li>Of health care services used in the past 90 days, 40% utilized medical services; 28% utilized behavioral health care services; and 12% utilized dental care services. 33% reporting getting medical care from Urgent Care and 29% from the Emergency Room.</li> <li>Respondents who have Medicaid/AHCCCS were significantly more likely than those who do not have this insurance to report using an Urgent Care (39% vs 18%) or the ER (34% vs 13%) for health care.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Engagement in Education and Employment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>45% of youth surveyed are currently enrolled in an education program (such as classes to complete a GED or high school) and 11% are enrolled in a formal job training program for a profession. 24% are currently employed.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the past 90 days, 26% received assistance in finding a job; 21% received help in obtaining documents needed for employment and/or education, such as and identification, birth certificate, or social security card; and 19% have participated in programming for job training.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Income and Benefits</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40% of youth receive money from family or friends as a source of income, 26% earn money from odd or non-traditional jobs, and 23% earn money from selling personal belongings.</li> <li>• Youth who identified as LGBTQ were significantly more likely than heterosexual/cisgender youth (15% vs 4%) to have engaged in paid sex activities or escort work as a source of income.</li> <li>• The monthly income of young people surveyed ranges from \$0 to \$1,900, with an average monthly income of \$413, and median monthly income of \$230.</li> <li>• 65% receive Food Stamps/SNAP benefits. Other common benefits received by youth who meet program eligibility criteria include WIC (16%), money or stipend from an agency (15%), and free or reduced-price lunch (10%).</li> </ul>

**Youth Supportive Networks**

Seventy-one percent of youth surveyed reported that they have one or more professional service providers with whom they could talk to about important matters or turn to for help. Respondents ages 18-24 were significantly more likely than those under 18

years (75% vs 47%) to have one or more professional support persons. LGBTQ+ youth were significantly more likely to report have one or more professional support persons (85% vs 68%) than heterosexual and cisgender youth.



## Unmet Needs of Youth Experiencing Homelessness

<p><b>Unmet Housing and Basic Needs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing - 29% of youth surveyed reported unmet housing needs in the past 90 days. Specifically, 21% could not get financial assistance for housing in past 90 days; 17% could not get into longer-term housing; and 16% could not access short-term housing or emergency shelter.</li> <li>• Most informants interviewed said that a lack of housing available for youth and young adults was a primary unmet need in Tucson/Pima County. Interviewees reported the need to have multiple housing options for youth, youth friendly shelters, and LGBTQ+ youth-friendly shelters.</li> <li>• Food - 29% of youth surveyed don't get enough to eat.</li> <li>• Barriers to accessing food include 85% didn't have enough money to buy food; 47% use up SNAP benefits before the end of the month; 43% don't have transportation to access places to buy food; and 30% don't know where free food is available.</li> <li>• Child Care - 30% of youth surveyed are pregnant (6%) and/or parenting (27%) and need access to child care.</li> <li>• 24% of pregnant and parenting youth said they needed child care in the past 90 days but could not get it. 45% of pregnant and parenting youth said lack of childcare keeps them from achieving their employment and education goals.</li> <li>• Other gaps observed in needed services were access to laundry facilities (19%), transportation (13%), clothing items (12%), and toiletry products (10%).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Unmet Health/Well-being Needs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 52% of respondents reported unmet dental care needs; 33% reported unmet medical care needs; and 26% reported unmet behavioral health care needs.</li> <li>• Unmet health care needs in the last 90 days include: dental (18%), medical (11%), vision/eye care (10%), sexual health (8%), and behavioral health (7%).</li> <li>• A gap identified in health insurance access is that 26% of youth surveyed are not enrolled in Medicaid/AHCCCS, when they are likely eligible for this program.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Unmet Education/Employment Needs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over half (56%) of survey respondents ages 18-24 have less than a high school education.</li> <li>• Only 38% of young adults ages 18-24 are currently enrolled in an education program, such as classes to complete a GED or high school.</li> <li>• 69% of respondents are looking for work.</li> <li>• The highest percentage of respondents who needed a service related to education and employment but could not get it at least one time in the past 90 days was for assistance in obtaining identifying documents (16%).</li> <li>• Other gaps noted in needed services in the past 90 days include help finding a job (10%), access to job training programs (10%), and classes to complete a GED or high school education (8%).</li> </ul>

<b>Gaps in Income and Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20% of youth surveyed reported that they had no sources of income.</li> <li>• Possible gaps identified in benefits utilization include: Hispanic/Latinx youth were significantly less likely than non-Hispanic/Latinx youth to report receiving Medicaid/AHCCCS (67% vs 82%). Only 39% of pregnant and parenting youth surveyed reported receiving WIC, a program for which they are eligible.</li> </ul>
<b>Barriers to Meeting Needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of Income - 86% reported no steady income as primary reason for not having permanent/stable housing; 85% don't have enough money to buy food; and 40% don't get needed medical care because it is too expensive.</li> <li>• Lack of Transportation - 46% did not have transportation to get to a health care provider's office; 43% said lack of transportation was a barrier to getting adequate food.</li> <li>• Lack of Awareness - 30% of youth surveyed reported that they don't know where free food is available; 29% don't know where to get free or low-cost health care; 18% don't know how to set up a health care appointment; 9% don't know how to apply for government programs that provide medical care.</li> </ul>

### Education and Employment Engagement and Gaps

Nearly two thirds (62%, n=95) of survey respondents had less than a high school education, which includes all youth surveyed who were under 18 (n=19) and 56% (n=76) of young adults ages 18-24. Over a quarter of young adults (18-24), 28% (n=43), had completed high school and 11% (n=16) combined have taken some college courses or completed technical or trade certification.

Almost half of youth surveyed (45%, n=69) were currently enrolled in an education program (such as classes to complete a GED or high school), which includes 95% (n=18) of youth under age 18 and only 38% (n=51) of young adults 18 years old or older. Additionally, 11% (n=17) were enrolled in a formal job training program for a profession, all of whom were 18 years old or older. A quarter of survey respondents (24%, n=37) reported that they were currently employed and 69% (n=80) were looking for work, the majority of whom were in the age range of 18-24 years.

### Unmet Education and Employment Needs

Of the education and employment services listed, the main services utilized by respondents were also those that others reported being unable to obtain in the past 90 days. The highest percentage of respondents who needed a service but could not get it at least one time in the past 90 days was for assistance in obtaining identifying documents (16%, n=24). Other gaps noted in needed services included help finding a job (10%, n=15), job training programs (10%, n=15), and classes to complete a GED or high school education (8%, n=13).

### Barriers to Achieving Education and Employment Goals

Approximately a third of respondents (35%, n=55) indicated that unstable housing and a lack of transportation were barriers to them achieving their education and employment goals. Additionally, 29% (n=45) cited that they lacked the qualifications to achieve their goals. Other deterrents included cost (20%, n=31), missing identity documents (20%, n=31), lack of child care (19%, n=28), and criminal history (18%, n=27).

## Social and Emotional Well-being Gaps

A review of local Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) data highlights profound social and emotional well-being needs of youth experiencing homelessness in Tucson and throughout Pima County<sup>28</sup>.

- 73% of youth reported some form of emotional, physical, psychological, or sexual abuse, or other trauma to be the cause of their homelessness.
- 35% percent were currently involved in the legal system.
- 34% had been attacked or beaten up since becoming homeless.
- 29% tried to harm themselves or others since becoming homeless.
- 23% reported difficulty maintaining housing due to their mental health.

The pervasive nature of trauma and the prevalence of traumatic events experienced by youth on their own poses significant challenges to healthy adolescent development, emotional security, overall well-being, and social connectedness. Access to trauma-informed, youth-driven mental/behavioral health care is identified as a frequently unmet need by service providers and youth alike. Young people experiencing homelessness report challenges accessing and navigating the public behavioral health system, an issue that is especially challenging for minor-age youth who are disconnected from their families. Subsets of youth also have high needs for behavioral health and other wraparound services that are difficult to obtain and/or require specific diagnoses.

Beyond mental/behavioral health needs, social and emotional well-being relies on rich interpersonal and community connections. For many youth, such connections have been fractured as a result of family dispute or dysfunction, histories of out-of-home care in child welfare and/or juvenile justice settings, disconnection from schools and other social environments, and other negative life experiences. The resulting disconnectedness is readily apparent in local data - 31% of youth experiencing homelessness surveyed as part of TPCH's 2019 Homeless Youth Needs Assessment reported having no supportive relationships with family members, 38% reported no supportive relationships with other older adults, and 32% reported having no friends their own age on whom they could count for emotional support<sup>29</sup>.

Experiences of social disconnection and inadequate access to comprehensive and readily accessible treatment, services, and supportive social networks erode emotional well-being and are especially concerning among youth with complex trauma histories, including many LGBTQ+ youth and survivors of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation, resulting in higher rates of substance abuse, self-harm, and suicidal ideation and attempts.

To be effective, comprehensive responses to youth homelessness must be tooled to provide trauma-informed supportive services through which young people are able to develop and strengthen healthy social relationships, heal from trauma, and build meaningful and natural connections to peers and older adults outside of the social service environment.

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<sup>28</sup> TPCH 2017-2018 Youth Coordinated Entry Assessment Analysis, 2018.

<sup>29</sup> TPCH 2019 Homeless Youth Needs Assessment, LeCroy & Milligan Associates, 2019.

# GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION STEPS

## GOAL 1: YOUTH VOICE AND ACTION – TO ENGAGE YOUTH IN LEADING AND IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS YOUTH HOMELESSNESS.

Objective	Action Step	Responsible	Timeline
1.1 Elevate youth voice within the Continuum of Care and other community decision-making bodies	Conduct outreach and education to local system leaders and government bodies regarding the importance of youth leadership in local response to youth homelessness.	YHDP Operations Team, YAC, YHDP Youth Leadership Change Team	October 2020
	Advocate for formal housing commission at the local or state level to address youth homelessness with majority representation by young adults under the age of 25 with lived experiences of housing instability.	CoC Board, YAC, YHDP Youth Leadership Change Team, YOTO,	April 2021
	Identify and implement strategies to improve equity and inclusivity in recruitment and engagement of young leaders.	Grand Challenge Ride or Die Team, YAC	December 2020
	Conduct outreach, education, and cultivation of young leaders to support effective participation in community-level decision-making.	Grand Challenge Ride or Die Team, YOTO, YAC	On-Going (begins immediately)
1.2 Develop a sustainable resource plan to support the Youth Action Committee	Develop and secure annual budget to fully sustain the Youth Action Committee and provide flexible funding for the committee's outreach, planning, and advocacy activities.	Collaborative Applicant, YAC, YOTO, CoC Board	June 2021
	Apply for and secure government and philanthropic funding commitments to fulfill annual funding need.	Collaborative Applicant, CoC Board	June 2022
	Develop Youth Action Committee leadership to self-manage annual budget with administrative assistance.	Collaborative Applicant, YAC	June 2021

Objective	Action Step	Responsible	Timeline
1.3 Develop and implement tools and technical assistance to promote youth leadership opportunities within youth service providing agencies and community-level planning groups.	Obtain technical assistance to select or develop a youth leadership and/or youth/adult partnership training curriculum, outreach plan, and community support model.	YHDP Operations Team, YAC	December 2020
	Mobilize youth/ally partner teams to deliver training and technical assistance support to agencies and other groups in adopting and expanding youth leadership opportunities and youth/ally partnership practices.	YHDP Operations Team, Our Family Services, YAC	March 2021
1.4 Mobilize youth with lived experience of housing instability as agents of change in civic and social arenas.	Provide on-going legislative and public advocacy training for Youth Action Committee members and other youth with lived experiences of housing instability.	YOTO, Arizona Housing Coalition, YAC, YHDP Youth Leadership Change Team	On-Going (in place by February 2021)
	Initiate relationships with local, state, and Federal representatives to establish forums for YAC legislative advocacy and organize legislative visits and testimony on relevant issues	YOTO, Arizona Housing Coalition, YAC, YHDP Youth Leadership Change Team	February 2021
	Host and pursue outside opportunities for youth panel presentations and youth-led training in social sector (i.e. health, justice, behavioral health, education, etc.)	CoC Board, YAC, Collaborative Applicant, YHDP Youth Leadership Change Team	June 2021
	Cultivate partnerships with other youth leadership groups to share capacity, facilitate peer information exchange, and cultivate opportunities for collective action.	CoC Board, YOTO, YAC, Our Family Services, YHDP Youth Leadership Change Team	June 2021

**GOAL 2: HOUSING – TO IMPROVE HOUSING PERMANENCY AND DECREASE REPEAT HOMELESSNESS AMONG YOUTH.**

Objective	Action Step	Responsible	Timeline
2.1 Expand array of housing options available to youth experiencing homelessness	Increase dedicated low-barrier shelter/crisis housing options for youth ages 18-24.	Local government, housing service agencies	December 2021
	Educate housing providers on various housing options permitted by HUD and/or other Federal agencies but not currently deployed locally (roommate options, room rental, campus housing, etc.)	Collaborative Applicant, YHDP Operations Team	October 2020
	Implement local CoC standards to protect youth choice in housing options and provide a listing of allowable housing options to all youth entering CoC, YHDP, and ESG-funded housing services.	YAC, CoC Committee(s), CoC Board	October 2020
	Advocate for adoption of CoC standards related to youth choice and housing options among all housing providers serving youth regardless (including projects not dedicated for youth) whenever permitted by providers' funding requirements	YAC, CoC Committee(s), CoC Board	October 2020
	Develop and implement roommate matching activities for youth interested in shared housing options.	YAC, YHDP Grantees, Our Family Services	October 2020
	Improve flow and pathways for direct linkage from Coordinated Entry and crisis services to non-time limited mainstream housing services (Housing Choice Vouchers, Public Housing, Family Unification Program vouchers, Medicaid housing, etc.)	CoC Committee(s), CoC Board, Mainstream Housing Providers	June 2021
	Establish host home and kinship-based housing options for youth.	Youth Housing and Service Providers	June 2022

Objective	Action Step	Responsible	Timeline
2.2 Decrease returns to homelessness among youth engaged in the homeless response system.	Conduct in-depth analysis of local data provided through VI-SPDAT assessment, youth housing provider data, and self-reports by youth to identify correlations between returns to homelessness and other household characteristics.	HMIS Lead, CoC Committees, YAC, Collaborative Applicant	September 2021
	Convene housing providers, youth, and system partners to co-develop strategies to mitigate identified correlations and risk factors.	HMIS Lead, CoC Committees, YAC, Collaborative Applicant	February 2022
	Require that six months of full aftercare services be made available to all youth served through YHDP projects and recommend that these services be provided in all youth housing projects.	YHDP RFP Workgroup, CoC Committee(s), Board	July 2020
	Develop a formal process and resource to connect youth served by non-youth specific housing programs to access youth-specific resources (i.e. youth advocacy, peer support, transportation, education connections, recreational/social activities, aftercare, etc.)	YHDP Grantee	October 2020
	Develop targeted move-on strategies and resource the provision of light-touch supportive services for youth in need of long-term housing subsidy but without intensive supportive service needs to transition from transitional and permanent housing programs to public housing, voucher, and subsidized affordable housing programs administered by local Public Housing Authorities and affordable housing developments.	YHDP Grantee	October 2020
	Develop system-wide approaches to support family reunification as alternative to and/or prioritized outcome of housing services for youth who wish to reunite with their families.	YHDP Operations Team, CoC Committee(s), CoC Board	June 2021

Objective	Action Step	Responsible	Timeline
2.3 Increase number of permanent housing units for youth in the local homeless response system.	Convene youth permanent housing task force with local and state government agencies, non-profit agencies, aligned housing systems, business, and philanthropy to develop strategic roadmap and resource commitments necessary to meet projected five-year permanent housing capacity needs.	Local government, CoC Board, YAC	June 2021
	Sustain current rapid rehousing for youth housing inventory and establish 122 additional units by 2024 (53+ through YHDP).	Local government, housing agencies	December 2024
	Sustain current permanent supportive housing for youth housing inventory and establish 77 additional units by 2024 (14+ through YHDP).	Local government, housing agencies	December 2024
2.4 Promote safe, inclusive shelter, housing, and services in local community.	Provide training and technical support for community shelter, housing, and service programs to address barriers to youth safety and promote youth-affirming environments and service delivery.	Our Family Services, YAC, YHDP Operations Team	In place by December 2021
	Advocate for the creation of youth-dedicated spaces within community's existing shelter/crisis housing stock (i.e. wings within existing shelter facilities reserved for youth, etc.)	YHDP Operations Team, ESG recipients, CoC	In place by December 2021
	Conduct quantitative and qualitative data analysis to identify disparities in youth housing system related to race, ethnicity, gender, immigration status, parenting status, and other key characteristics.	YAC, Grand Challenge Ride or Die Team	December 2020
	Develop action plan to address disparities and improve equity across all aspects of housing and service participation (assessment, crisis services, transitional and permanent housing service, outcomes related to housing, education, and income, etc.)	YAC, Grand Challenge Ride or Die Team	April 2021
	Collaborate with system partners to address disparities related to linkage, engagement, and/or participant outcomes related to health, justice, employment, education, etc.	YAC, Grand Challenge Ride or Die Team	December 2021

**GOAL 3: YOUTH OPPORTUNITY – TO INCREASE EDUCATIONAL ENGAGEMENT AND INCOME GENERATION AMONG YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS.**

Objective	Action Step	Responsible	Timeline
<p>3.1 To improve collaboration between agencies serving youth experiencing homelessness and secondary/post-secondary education agencies, GED and high school alternative programs, and career/technical education services.</p>	<p>Establish and improve partnerships with local community college and university to collaboratively respond to the needs of students transitioning out of foster care and unaccompanied and pregnant/parenting students experiencing homelessness and housing instability to promote continued educational engagement and attainment.</p>	<p>YHDP Education Change Team, PCC, UofA, Pima County CSET, YOTO</p>	<p>September 2021</p>
	<p>Facilitate quarterly networking and resource-sharing events for McKinney-Vento Homeless Student Liaisons, education providers, and youth housing/service providers to improve coordination, communication, and collaboration.</p>	<p>AZ Department of Education, LEAs, YHDP Education Change Team, YOTO</p>	<p>On-Going (in place by January 2021)</p>
	<p>Develop and implement streamlined education referral processes and points of contact for students and potential students experiencing homelessness.</p>	<p>LEAs, YHDP Education Change Team, YOTO</p>	<p>August 2021</p>
	<p>Provide and/or link youth residing in campus housing without alternative housing to short-term housing, meal and basic needs assistance, and supportive services during holiday and summer breaks (i.e. host homes or other temporary housing).</p>	<p>YHDP Education Change Team, PCC, UofA</p>	<p>December 2021</p>
	<p>Develop and/or promote existing online training materials related to youth homelessness and education for delivery to education, housing, and other youth-serving entities.</p>	<p>YHDP Education Change Team, YAC, Collaborative Applicant, YOTO</p>	<p>August 2021</p>
	<p>Partner with local education agencies to explore and implement opportunities to improve service coordination and student success through data-sharing as appropriate and permitted.</p>	<p>YHDP Education Change Team, LEAs, AZ Department of Education, YOTO, HMIS Lead</p>	<p>May 2022</p>

Objective	Action Step	Responsible	Timeline
3.2 To promote participation in education and employment resources that further the individual goals of youth experiencing homelessness.	Collaborate, communicate, and encourage participation in periodic education and employment service fairs targeting youth experiencing homelessness with representation from local workforce development system, career/technical education, educational providers, and employers.	YHDP Education Change Team, YHDP Employment Change Team, Education Providers, Pima County CSET	On-Going (in place May 2021)
	Engage, expand or replicate existing incentive programs for educational attainment and employability classes to serve the broadest sense of youth experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness including young adults in GED and high school alternative programs, post-secondary education programs, career/technical education.	Youth Housing and Service Providers	June 2022
3.3 To improve youth access to and utilization of available mainstream benefits.	Distribute youth-friendly guide to mainstream benefit programs (SNAP, SSI/SSDI, Medicaid, Marketplace insurance, WIC, ABAWD Medicaid waivers, TANF, McKinney Vento entitlements, etc.)	YHDP Connections Change Team	March 2021
	Increase the number of SOAR-certified youth service professionals within the community (including school staff) to facilitate local practice for SOAR-certified staff to collaborate and engage in peer learning.	Collaborative Applicant, YHDP Operations Team	December 2021
	Deliver online training for youth experiencing homelessness and service provider staff and educators related to available mainstream benefits, eligibility, and enrollment requirements/process.	YAC, Collaborative Applicant, YHDP Connections Change Team	March 2021

Objective	Action Step	Responsible	Timeline
3.4 To improve collaboration between agencies serving youth experiencing homelessness and workforce development programs, business owners, nonprofits, and elected officials to increase youth access to and utilization of mainstream employment resources.	Collaborate to increase responsiveness of youth -specific employment readiness education and job search support for youth experiencing homelessness in partnership with local workforce development programs.	Pima County CSET, YHDP Employment Change Team	December 2021
	Identify and implement opportunities for co-enrollment and/or improved data sharing and referral pathways from youth housing services to existing workforce development system.	Pima County CSET, HMIS Lead, YHDP Grantees, YHDP Employment Change Team	June 2021
	Assemble youth housing/service and workforce development system stakeholder group and develop action strategies to increase employment opportunities for youth experiencing homelessness.	YHDP Employment Change Team, Pima County CSET	December 2021
3.5 To increase the availability of short-term, immediate income generating opportunities for youth experiencing homelessness	Increase dialogue and cultivate relationships with local employers and community agencies to encourage recruitment and hiring of youth experiencing homelessness.	YHDP Employment Change Team, Pima County CSET	December 2021
	Sustain stipend funding for Youth Action Committee participation.	CoC Board	On-Going
	Promote youth participation in existing short-term, immediate employment programs managed by local government and non-profit agencies and/or develop similar programs specifically targeting youth experiencing homelessness.	YHDP Employment Change Team, Pima County CSET	March 2021
	Increase paid internships and on the job training partnerships through the local workforce development system and/or through Continuum of Care members leading to permanent employment.	YHDP Employment Change Team	On-Going (measured annually in December)
	Promote employment of youth experiencing homelessness in YHDP projects and other youth housing and service programs.	YHDP RFP Workgroup, YHDP Grantees	October 2020

Objective	Action Step	Responsible	Timeline
3.6 To reduce transportation barriers to education and employment success.	Explore and develop partnerships that provide alternative transportation resources for youth experiencing homelessness, including and beyond public and school bus transportation.	YHDP Transportation Change Team	June 2021
	Expand availability of taxi and ride-share service options to meet transportation needs when public transit is limited or unavailable.	YHDP RFP Workgroup, YHDP Transportation Change Team, YHDP Grantees	October 2020
	Partner with community bicycle purchase/repair programs and auto mechanics to provide no-cost or low-cost repairs and maintenance for youth experiencing homelessness.	YHDP Transportation Change Team	June 2021
	Develop vehicle ownership education, savings assistance resources, and driver's license education for youth experiencing homelessness in partnership with driver education programs, individual development accounts, and/or other community programs.	YHDP Transportation Change Team	December 2021

**GOAL 4: HEALTH – TO INCREASE ACCESS TO AND USE OF MEDICAL, BEHAVIORAL, DENTAL, AND SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING RESOURCES.**

Objective	Action Step	Responsible	Timeline
4.1 To increase knowledge and utilization of community health and well-being resources among youth experiencing homelessness.	Partner with community health center marketing professionals to develop or disseminate existing online educational video, print/electronic marketing materials, and youth-friendly health education and service enrollment guide for dissemination to youth experiencing homelessness.	YHDP Wellness Change Team	June 2021

Objective	Action Step	Responsible	Timeline
4.2 Increase rates of health insurance coverage among youth experiencing homelessness.	Promote Medicaid (AHCCCS, KidsCare) enrollment among all eligible youth experiencing homelessness and provide enrollment support through outreach, navigation, shelter/crisis housing, drop-in center, and housing programs.	YHDP Wellness Change Team, Service Provider Agencies	On-Going (in place October 2020)
	Identify subject matter experts at youth-serving agencies and within the community to assist youth who are eligible for Healthcare Marketplace and/or private insurance options sponsored by employers or education programs in making informed health insurance decisions.	YHDP Wellness Change Team, Service Provider Agencies	March 2021
4.3 To expand availability of easily accessible no-cost/low-cost health and dental services for youth experiencing homelessness.	Convene non-profit dental service programs, private dental care providers, youth experiencing homelessness, integrated health centers, and youth housing/service providers to explore and promote existing dental service options for youth experiencing homelessness.	YHDP Wellness Change Team	December 2021
	Convene non-profit medical and health programs, health care providers, youth experiencing homelessness, integrated health centers, private philanthropies, and public health service providers to explore and expand resources for healthcare needs that are not covered under Medicaid programs and/or unaffordable under Marketplace or other private insurance (i.e. reproductive choice, gender-affirming health needs, top-tier prescriptions, etc.)	YHDP Wellness Change Team, Grand Challenge Ride or Die Team	December 2021
	Collaborate with local dental offices to provide no-cost/low-cost dental services for youth experiencing homelessness.	YHDP Wellness Change Team	December 2021
	Collaborate with existing no-cost mobile and stationary healthcare clinics and other healthcare providers to establish no-cost healthcare services targeting youth experiencing homelessness (i.e. mobile health unit, recurring office hours for basic health services at one or more youth-serving agencies, etc.)	YHDP Wellness Change Team	December 2021

Objective	Action Step	Responsible	Timeline
<p>4.4 To increase awareness and utilization of behavioral health services as needed among youth.</p>	<p>Convene youth experiencing homelessness, local behavioral health system, and youth service providers to develop an action plan to eliminate or mitigate common barriers to sustained engagement in public behavioral health services by youth experiencing homelessness.</p>	<p>YAC, YHDP Wellness Change Team</p>	<p>August 2021</p>
	<p>Partner with public behavioral health system to develop or adopt existing online education and youth-friendly behavioral health resource and enrollment guides.</p>	<p>YAC, YHDP Wellness Change Team, Collaborative Applicant</p>	<p>December 2021</p>
	<p>Establish primary point of contact with behavioral health system and integrated health plans to assist with issues related to enrollment and on-going participation of youth experiencing homelessness in behavioral health services.</p>	<p>YHDP Wellness Change Team</p>	<p>December 2020</p>
<p>4.5 To increase behavioral health service options for youth experiencing homelessness not already enrolled public behavioral health services and to respond to acute behavioral health issues as needed regardless of enrollment in public services.</p>	<p>Establish one or more behavioral health professional staff positions within the youth homelessness response system to provide immediate support with acute behavioral health needs and to bridge behavioral health services for youth who not actively enrolled in public behavioral health services.</p>	<p>Service and behavioral health providers.</p>	<p>June 2022</p>

**GOAL 5: HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION – TO BETTER IDENTIFY AND IMMEDIATELY ASSIST YOUTH AT RISK OF EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS.**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action Step</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
5.1 To establish a flexible resource pool designated for diversion and prevention of youth homelessness or housing instability.	Map available prevention/early intervention resources and gaps to determine areas of greatest need for flexible funding pool.	YHDP Operations Team, Collaborative Applicant, HMIS Lead, YAC	March 2021
	Convene local philanthropy and state/local government, and United Way to assess opportunities to leverage non-Federal support for flexible prevention/assistance services.	Collaborative Applicant	July 2021
	Establish diversion/navigation support staffing and services specifically targeting youth in the local Coordinated Entry system.	YHDP Grantee	October 2020
5.2 Leverage public prevention resources to improve accessibility and reduce barriers for youth.	Improve coordination and/or direct referral from outreach and diversion programs, as well as the Coordinated Entry system, to Community Action Agency prevention/diversion resources.	YHDP Connections Change Team, Pima County CSET	December 2021
	Explore opportunities to establish youth dedicated Emergency Solutions Grant and/or State/local funded homelessness prevention and diversion services.	Local/state government, service provider agencies	On-Going (in place by March 2021)
5.3 Improve identification of youth at-risk of homelessness and rapid connection to homeless response system among youth served through child welfare, juvenile and adult justice, hospitals, education, and workforce development systems.	Develop or adopt existing triage tool(s) for use within youth-serving systems.	YHDP Coordinated Entry Team, CoC Committee(s), CoC Board	October 2020
	Elevate existing informal discharge partnerships to establish system-wide discharge planning approaches and coordination to reduce exits from youth-serving systems to homelessness.	YHDP Connections Change Team	December 2021

Objective	Action Step	Responsible	Timeline
5.4 Advertise prevention and diversion resources to youth.	Once sufficient resources are available, develop and implement a public education campaign regarding prevention and diversion resources to economically vulnerable and disconnected youth communities.	YAC, Collaborative Applicant	December 2022 (sooner if sufficient resources are deployed)

**GOAL 6: – TO LEVERAGE DATA AND COORDINATED ENTRY AS TOOLS FOR ENDING YOUTH HOMELESSNESS.**

Objective	Action Step	Responsible	Timeline
6.1 To identify all youth experiencing homelessness.	Establish an active by name list of all youth experiencing homelessness in Pima County as defined by any Federal agency.	Youth CE System Change Team, CoC Committees, HMIS Lead, Collaborative Applicant, Grand Challenge Ride or Die Team	June 2021
	Develop coordination strategies to ensure that all youth experiencing homelessness under any Federal definition are added to the by name list upon identification.	Youth CE System Change Team, CoC Committees, HMIS Lead, Collaborative Applicant, Grand Challenge Ride or Die Team	June 2021

Objective	Action Step	Responsible	Timeline
6.2 To improve Coordinated Entry system's ability to swiftly connect youth experiencing homelessness and/or living in dangerous environments to housing.	Establish a coordinated entry model for youth under the age of 18 or develop direct transfer pathways for minor-age youth aging into adulthood and still in need of housing assistance.	Youth CE Change Team, CoC Committee(s), HMIS Lead, Collaborative Applicant	December 2020
	Establish youth-specific navigation services and protocols.	YHDP Grantee, HMIS Lead, Collaborative Applicant	October 2020
	Expand availability of Coordinated Entry assessment within schools and other youth settings.	HMIS Lead, YHDP Education Change Team, Youth CE Change Team	On-Going (in place immediately)
	Develop and implement monitoring and improvement plans to ensure consistent use of appropriate VI-SPDAT tools for youth.	HMIS Lead, Collaborative Applicant, CE Committee	August 2020
	Update case conferencing procedures to more quickly and effectively connect youth experiencing homelessness to any available housing options.	Youth CE Change Team, CoC Committee(s), CoC Board	September 2020
	Develop prioritization methodology for referral to YHDP projects and explore opportunities to expand use of methodology within CoC and other funded youth projects.	Youth CE Change Team, CoC Committee(s), CoC Board, HMIS Lead, Collaborative Applicant	September 2020
	Establish and incorporate into YHDP continuous quality improvement plan an expedited attempt to locate process for youth receiving referrals to housing.	YHDP CE Change Team, CoC Committees, HMIS Lead, Collaborative Applicant	September 2020

Objective	Action Step	Responsible	Timeline
6.3 Expand HMIS coverage to include additional non-mandated programs for youth.	Identify, recruit and onboard non-mandated housing and service partners for participation in the HMIS.	HMIS Lead	On-Going (in place immediately)
6.4 Improve consistency service planning and measurement in youth housing and service projects.	Require use of the full SPDAT as case management tool for all YHDP projects and explore expanded use in other CoC and youth projects.	YAC, YHDP Operations Team	June 2020
	Expand data collection to include Runaway and Homeless Youth data collection requirements and YHDP collective impact metrics for all YHDP projects and explore expanded use in other CoC and youth projects.	YAC, YHDP Operations Team, HMIS Lead	June 2020
6.5 Improve accuracy of annual Point in Time counts of all youth experiencing homelessness.	Replicate single-site drop-in PIT event approach for youth across multiple sites in Pima County.	YAC, CoC PIT Workgroup, Homeless Youth Subcommittee,	January 2021
	Mobilize young leaders to plan and conduct peer outreach for PIT event(s).	YAC, Homeless Youth Subcommittee, CoC PIT Workgroup	November 2020
	Expand PIT data collection to more effectively enumerate youth experiencing homelessness under any Federal definition, including youth in educational and other system partner settings, and use data to inform on-going system refinements.	YAC, YHDP Operations Team, Grand Challenge Ride or Die Team	January 2021

**GOAL 7: EQUITY – TO ENSURE THAT YOUTH EXPERIENCE EQUITABLE ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUCCESS WITHIN THE LOCAL YOUTH HOMELESSNESS RESPONSE SYSTEM**

Objective	Action Step	Responsible	Timeline
<p>7.1 To improve local understanding of inequities as they exist within the local youth homelessness response system, their institutional causes, local processes and practices that contribute to inequity, and damaging impacts to youth and the community.</p>	<p>Build leadership team readiness for equity action through multiple sessions for YHDP and A Way Home America Grand Challenge core stakeholders to engage in relationship-building and exploratory activities.</p>	<p>YHDP Operations Team; A Way Home America Ride or Die Team; CoC Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee</p>	<p>October 2020</p>
	<p>Develop a schedule for more expansive racial equity exploration with full YHDP and A Way Home America Grand Challenge teams.</p>	<p>A Way Home America Ride or Die Team; CoC Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee</p>	<p>December 2020</p>
	<p>Complete equity data analysis and produce recommendations to improve equity as it relates to access to permanent housing and employment, education, housing, health, and social well-being outcomes.</p>	<p>HMIS Lead; A Way Home America Ride or Die Team; CoC Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee</p>	<p>March 2021</p>
	<p>Conduct professional education for local youth service providers, YHDP grantees, and CoC and YHDP leadership related to racial equity, LGBTQ+ inclusivity, and best practices.</p>	<p>A Way Home America Ride or Die Team; CoC Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee</p>	<p>Spring 2021</p>

Objective	Action Step	Responsible	Timeline
7.2 To re-envision and expand diversity within YHDP and CoC leadership and participation structures.	Review composition of A Way Home America Grand Challenge Ride or Die Team and re-arrange as needed to improve diversity and representation within both the youth and ally participants.	A Way Home America Ride or Die Team	August 2020
	Review composition of all YHDP stakeholder groups and develop intentional recruitment and engagement strategies to increase diversity and representation at all levels of decision-making.	A Way Home America Ride or Die Team, YHDP Operations Team	July 2021
	Routinely review YHDP stakeholder participation and solicit input to address structural barriers to diversity, equity, and inclusion within associated practices, processes, and activities.	A Way Home America Ride or Die Team	On-Going
7.3 To develop a concrete action strategy to address inequity and create transformative change within the local youth homelessness response system.	Incorporate equity considerations into the CoC's annual Coordinated Entry evaluation.	A Way Home America Ride or Die Team; CoC Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, Coordinated Entry Committee, HMIS Lead, Collaborative Applicant	July 2021
	Develop and initiate implementation of Equity Workplan to address identified barriers to equitable access, engagement, service, and outcomes among all youth and achieve functional zero in homelessness among LGBTQ+ youth and youth of color.	A Way Home America Ride or Die Team, CoC Board	July 2021

Objective	Action Step	Responsible	Timeline
7.4 To embed and sustain equity as a priority within all aspects of the local youth homelessness response system.	Identify and secure or allocate the time, funding, and other resources needed to achieve Equity Workplan.	A Way Home America Ride or Die Team, CoC Board, Collaborative Applicant	July 2021
	Incorporate equity into local progress measurements and YHDP continuous quality improvement strategies.	A Way Home America Ride or Die Team, Collaborative Applicant	September 2020
	Achieve functional zero in homelessness of LGBTQ+ youth and youth of color.	A Way Home America Ride or Die Team, CoC Committees, CoC Board	June 2022

# YHDP PARTNERS

PARTNER TYPE	ORGANIZATION	INVOLVEMENT
CoC Board (required)	Tucson Pima Collaboration to End Homelessness (TPCH)	Collaborates with Youth Action Committee to oversee, govern, and advance YHDP initiative and Coordinated Community Plan.
Youth Action Board (required)	TPCH Youth Action Committee	Members of YHDP Operations Team; Lead in Youth Voice initiatives; approves Coordinated Community Plan, YHDP projects and grant recipients; facilitates YHDP Youth Leadership Change Team; coordinates collaboration with other Youth Leadership Councils; members of all YHDP Change Teams; participates in continuous quality improvement process oversight.
Local and State Government (required)	City of Tucson Housing & Community Development	As Collaborative Applicant for the Tucson/Pima County Continuum of Care, monitors and supports grant recipients & Teams, coordinates YHDP implementation activities in partnership with Youth Action Committee, as Emergency Solutions Grant recipient and Public Housing Authority, participates in coordination activities to strategically align resources and improve coordination between homeless response system and mainstream housing resources. Participates in YHDP Operations Team and all YHDP Change Teams.
Local Government (required)	Pima County Community Services, Employment and Training	As HMIS Lead, participates in the YHDP Change Teams and leads data collection, reporting, and associated Action Steps. As WIOA Workforce Development System Lead and home of the WIOA Board, participates in the YHDP Employment Change Team, delivers and coordinates employment and training services throughout the region. As Emergency Solutions Grant recipient and Community Action Agency, participates in coordination activities to strategically align resources and improve coordination between homeless response system and mainstream resources.

<b>PARTNER TYPE</b>	<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>INVOLVEMENT</b>
Criminal Justice/Local Government	Pima County Criminal Justice Reform Unit	Member of YHDP Connections Change Team to improve coordination to reduce exits from adult justice system to homelessness.
Juvenile Justice/Local Government	Juvenile Justice Coalition	Member of YHDP Connections Change Team to improve coordination to reduce exits from youth-serving systems to homelessness.
Public Child Welfare Agency/State Government (required)	Arizona Department of Child Safety	Member of YHDP Connections Change Team to improve coordination to reduce exits from youth-serving systems to homelessness.
Early Childhood Development and Child Care providers	Child-Parent Centers	Provides training for youth housing and services providers regarding early childhood education resources, prioritizes children of pregnant and parenting youth for Head Start and Early Head Start services.
State Education Agency/State Government	Arizona Department of Education	Member of YHDP Operations Team and YHDP Education Transformation Team; facilitates partnerships between YHDP and McKinney-Vento liaisons in Pima County; promotes YHDP initiatives within Pima County secondary schools.
Local Education Agency/Local Government	Pima County Superintendent of Schools	Member of YHDP Education Change Team; coordinates efforts to identify and enumerate youth experiencing homelessness in educational settings; promotes YHDP initiatives within Pima County secondary schools.
Institutions of Higher Education	Pima Community College	Member of the Education Change Team
Institutions of Higher Education	University of Arizona - Fostering Success	Member of the Education Change Team
Institutions of Higher Education	University of Arizona - Southwest Institute for Research on Women (SIROW)	Lead support and coordination entity for A Way Home America Grand Challenge, host site for youth planning positions, member of YHDP Operations Team.
Local Education Agency	Amphitheater School District	Member of the YHDP Education Change Team, Coordinated Entry site for students experiencing homelessness

PARTNER TYPE	ORGANIZATION	INVOLVEMENT
Local Education Agency	McKinney-Vento Liaisons in Pima County	Member of the Education Change Team
Local Education Agency	Tucson Preparatory School	Member of the Education Change Team
Local Education Agency	Adult Basic Education	Member of the Education Change Team
Local Education Agency	Pima JTED Joint Technical Education District	Member of the Education Change Team
Local Education Agency	Pima Vocational High School	Member of the Education Change Team
Local Education Agency	Las Artes	Member of the Education Change Team
Local Education Agencies	Indian Oasis School District	Member of the Education Change Team
Runaway and Homeless Youth Program Provider/ Non-Profit Youth Agency, YHDP Lead Agency	Our Family Services	As YHDP Lead Agency, coordinates YHDP Planning process; provides administrative staff support to the Youth Action Committee; coordinates development and implementation of uniform data collection and evaluation measures for Tucson/Pima County youth projects. Participates in YHDP Operations Team and Change Teams.
Runaway and Homeless Youth Program Provider/Non-Profit Youth Agency	Arizona Youth Partnership	Provides host home services for pregnant and parenting youth, comprehensive pregnancy and parenting services.

PARTNER TYPE	ORGANIZATION	INVOLVEMENT
Non-Profit Youth Organization	Youth on Their Own	Provides administrative staff support to the Youth Action Committee; community lead for YHDP education initiatives and Youth Action Committee advocacy initiatives; member of the YHDP Education Change Team; YHDP Operations Team, and YHDP Youth Leadership Change Team.
Non-Profit Youth Organization	Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation	Coordinate services for LGBTQ+ youth and youth at risk for or living with HIV/AIDS, participate in A Way Home America Grand Challenge efforts, member of YHDP Connections Change Team.
Non-Profit Youth Organization	Arizona Serve	Member of YHDP Employment Change Team
Health, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse Agency	El Rio Health Centers	Member of YHDP Wellness Change Team, participates in linking existing dental and behavioral health services to youth homelessness system.
Health, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse Agency	Arizona Complete Health	Member of YHDP Wellness Change Team; coordinate Medicaid housing services; administer Regional Behavioral Health Authority services.
Health, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse Agencies	PPEP Integrated Care	Administer Medicaid insurance plan; collaborate with YHDP Wellbeing Change Team to promote YHDP health and well-being initiatives.
Employment Agency	Goodwill of Southern Arizona	Member of YHDP Employment Change Team, provide YHDP liaison to Youth on the Rise (community-wide initiative to improve life outcomes for opportunity youth).
Public Housing Authority	City of Tucson Public Housing Authority	Improve flow and pathways for direct linkage from Coordinated Entry and crisis services, member of CoC Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee.
Philanthropic Organizations/Youth Leadership Council	United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona	Member of YHDP Request for Proposals team, coordinate efforts of Youth on the Rise change initiative and youth leadership council with YHDP initiative and Youth Action Committee.

PARTNER TYPE	ORGANIZATION	INVOLVEMENT
Youth Leadership Councils	Youth Prevention Coalition	Collaborate with Youth Action Committee on youth voice and youth leadership initiatives; partner to elevate intersectional issues experienced by youth experiencing homelessness.
State/Local Coalition	Arizona Housing Coalition	Provide advocacy training and annual legislative agenda education for Youth Action Committee members; participate in YHDP Youth Leadership Change Team; coordinate state and national hill day activities.

# NEW PROJECTS TO BE FUNDED THROUGH YHDP

YHDP funds have been prioritized for peer outreach, advocacy, and engagement services; housing and service navigation; diversion and flexible fund assistance to prevent or provide rapid exit from homelessness; linkage and liaison to existing education and employment resources; crisis transitional housing; rapid rehousing; and permanent supportive housing interventions for youth. These service areas represent the most critical gaps in the region's youth homelessness response system and are intended to complement and enhance current investments addressing youth homelessness and housing instability.

## FRONT PORCH AND ENGAGEMENT SERVICES

### Peer Outreach, Engagement, and Advocacy

The YHDP team is committed to delivering on the promise of its vision to advance youth power and opportunity through meaningful partnerships. Toward this aim, YHDP funds will be used to employ peer youth engagement specialists to provide peer mentoring, support social and learning opportunities, and participate in peer outreach, navigation, and diversion services.

Target Population: Unaccompanied and pregnant and parenting youth and young adults ages 12-24.

HUD Homeless Definitions: Categories 1, 2, 3 (up to 10%), 4.

Project Type: Supportive Services Only, used as outreach and diversion/housing navigation (project may be combined with other Front

Porch Supportive Service Only project types to form a larger engagement, navigation, and diversion project).

Two-Year Budget: \$156,000

Anticipated Requests for HUD Exceptions and Special Conditions: TPCCH plans to submit the following request for regulatory exceptions for project(s) funded under this service area. If approved by HUD, these exceptions and conditions will increase the capacity of projects to successfully mitigate risk of homelessness and prevent housing assistance need among high-risk unstably housed youth.

1. Exception to 24 CFR 578.53(b)(3) permitting the project(s) to provide on-going aftercare services for up to 24 months permitting youth to continue to benefit from peer support and mentoring as they solidify their housing stability.
2. Special condition permitting the use of up to 10% of funds to serve high-risk youth meeting the HUD Category 3 definition of homelessness.

### Navigation and Case Management

The local youth homelessness response system has limited resources and capacity to support youth housing and service navigation. The few resources that exist are funded through aligned systems with limiting eligibility requirements (i.e. services available only to youth exiting child welfare or juvenile justice systems, youth enrolled in Medicaid-funded behavioral health services, etc.) The YHDP Navigation and Case Management project will offer dedicated housing and service navigation assistance for a broader population of youth

experiencing homelessness and housing instability while complementing and working in coordination with TPCH Coordinated Entry navigators.

Target Population: Unaccompanied and pregnant and parenting young adults ages 18-24. Youth under age 18 are provided similar services tailored to their circumstances through the Safe Place program but will also be eligible for more intensive services through this project as needed.

HUD Homeless Definitions: Categories 1, 2, 3 (up to 10%), and 4.

Project Type: Supportive Services Only, used as Housing Navigation (project may be combined with other Front Porch Supportive Service Only project types to form a larger engagement, navigation, and diversion project).

Two-Year Budget: \$250,000

Anticipated Requests for HUD Exceptions and Special Conditions: TPCH plans to submit the following requests for regulatory exceptions for project(s) funded under this service area. If approved by HUD, these exceptions and conditions will increase the capacity of projects to successfully mitigate risk of episodic homelessness and prevent further housing and service assistance need among high-risk unstably housed youth.

1. Exception to 24 CFR 578.53(b)(3) permitting the project(s) to provide on-going aftercare services for up to 24 months permitting youth to continue to benefit from navigation, case management, and care coordination, and to access mainstream benefits and available housing subsidies outside the homelessness response system.
2. Special condition permitting the use of up to 10% of funds to serve high-risk youth

meeting HUD Category 3 definition of homelessness.

### **Diversions Services**

Limited dedicated diversion services within the region exist to quickly identify and prevent unsheltered homelessness and rapidly resolve sheltered homelessness among youth. Diversion services will include professional staffing and flexible fund assistance aimed at diverting youth into natural, supportive environments and other age-appropriate housing and service resources including but not limited to family reunification, kinship care, host homes, short-term shallow subsidy, and service linkage. If approved by HUD, these exceptions and conditions will increase the capacity of projects to successfully mitigate risk of homelessness and prevent housing assistance need among high-risk unstably housed youth.

Target Population: Unaccompanied and pregnant and parenting young adults ages 12-24.

HUD Homeless Definitions: Categories 1, 2, 3 (up to 10%), and 4.

Project Type: Supportive Services Only, used as Diversion (project may be combined with other Front Porch Supportive Service Only project types to form a larger engagement, navigation, and diversion project).

Two-Year Budget: \$422,671

Anticipated Requests for HUD Exceptions and Special Conditions: TPCH plans to submit the following requests for regulatory exceptions for project(s) funded under this service area. If approved by HUD, these exceptions and conditions will increase the capacity of projects to successfully mitigate risk of episodic homelessness and prevent further housing and service assistance need among high-risk unstably housed youth.

1. Exception to 24 CFR 578.53(b)(3) permitting the project(s) to provide on-going aftercare services for up to 24 months permitting projects to quickly intervene in and prevent risk of return to homelessness.
2. Special condition permitting the use of up to 10% of funds to serve high-risk youth meeting the HUD Category 3 definition of homelessness.

### **Education and Employment Services**

There are an abundance of well-resourced education and employment resources operating in the region; however, these systems are often overwhelming for youth experiencing homelessness for whom rigid access requirements and limited knowledge of available supports present challenges to engagement. YHDP funds will be used to support a community liaison providing individual assistance and navigation to support young people's engagement in available education and employment programs.

Target Population: Unaccompanied and pregnant and parenting young adults ages 12-24.

HUD Homeless Definitions: Categories 1, 2, 3 (up to 10%), and 4.

Project Type: Supportive Services Only (project may be combined with other Front Porch Supportive Service Only project types to form a larger engagement, navigation, and diversion project).

Two-Year Budget: \$125,000

Anticipated Requests for HUD Exceptions and Special Conditions: TPCH plans to submit the following requests for regulatory exceptions for project(s) funded under this service area. If approved by HUD, these exceptions and conditions will permit the creation of a

centralized supportive services resource for youth prior to and beyond entry to permanent housing with the aim of increasing positive outcomes and improving responsiveness to changes in youth employment and education needs during their participation in supportive housing services.

1. Exception to 24 CFR 578.53(b)(3) permitting the project(s) to provide on-going services for up to 24 months after obtaining permanent housing to promote education and employment achievement among youth participants.
2. Special condition permitting the use of up to 10% of funds to serve high-risk youth meeting the HUD Category 3 definition of homelessness.

### **TRANSITIONAL HOUSING**

#### **Crisis Transitional/Bridge Housing**

Limited crisis housing options exist tailored to the unique needs and characteristics of youth and young adults within the region. With insufficient longer-term transitional housing and permanent housing resources for youth to meet local needs, young people who have been prioritized for housing assistance may still spend months in sheltered and unsheltered homeless situations. YHDP funds will be used to launch a site-based crisis transitional/bridge housing program for unaccompanied youth ages 18-24 aimed at serving:

- Young people who are at heightened vulnerability to exploitation and other risk factors on the streets and have been prioritized for permanent housing solutions but for whom units are not yet available.
- Young people for whom short-term transitional housing is sufficient to meet immediate safety and stability needs until family reunification, kinship care, campus housing, mainstream voucher, self-

sufficiency, or other stable housing arrangements can be secured.

- Young people for whom additional staff support and shared housing is preferable to rental assistance programs.

Target Population: Unaccompanied youth ages 18-24.

HUD Homeless Definitions: Category 1, 2, and 4.

Project Type: Transitional Housing (may be combined with Rapid Rehousing project type to form Joint Transitional Housing – Rapid Rehousing component).

Two-Year Budget: \$720,000

Anticipated Request for HUD Exceptions and Special Conditions: TPCH plans to submit the following request for regulatory exception for project(s) funded under this service area. If approved by HUD, this exception will increase the capacity of projects to effectively serve highly vulnerable youth, mitigate risk of episodic homelessness and prevent further housing and service assistance need among service participants.

1. Exception to 24 CFR 578.53(b)(3) permitting the project(s) to provide on-going aftercare services for up to 24 months enabling youth to access post-participation support and prevent returns to homelessness.

## PERMANENT HOUSING

### Rapid Rehousing

Local gaps analysis and system modeling indicate that 248 additional units of rapid rehousing for youth are needed over the next five years to achieve the community's goal of reaching functional zero in youth homelessness. YHDP funds will be used to

advance this aim through the creation of at least 53 additional year-round units of rapid rehousing for youth.

Target Population: Unaccompanied and pregnant and parenting youth ages 18-24.

HUD Homeless Definitions: Category 1, 2, and 4.

Project Type: Rapid Rehousing (PH-RRH)

Two-Year Budget: \$1,930,000

Anticipated Requests for HUD Exceptions and Special Conditions: TPCH plans to submit the following requests for regulatory exceptions for project(s) funded under this service area. If approved by HUD, these exceptions and conditions will increase the capacity of projects to effectively serve highly vulnerable youth, mitigate risk of episodic homelessness and prevent further housing and service assistance need among service participants.

1. Exception to 24 CFR 578.53(b)(3) permitting the project(s) to provide on-going aftercare services for up to 24 months enabling youth to access post-participation support and receive the low-level case management required to access mainstream housing
2. Special condition permitting the use of long-term rental assistance for up to 36 months when needed to support long-term housing stability and prevent returns to homelessness.

### Permanent Supportive Housing

Local gaps analysis and system modeling indicate that 94 additional units of rapid rehousing for youth are needed in the region over the next five years to achieve the community's goal of reaching functional zero in youth homelessness. YHDP funds will be used to advance this aim through the creation of at

least 14 additional year-round units of permanent supportive housing for youth.

Target Population: Unaccompanied and pregnant and parenting youth ages 18-24 with one or more disabilities who are experiencing chronic homelessness, meet HUD Dedicated Plus eligibility requirements, and/or are assessed as at highest vulnerability for chronic homelessness.

HUD Homeless Definitions: Category 1, 2, and 4.

Project Type: Permanent Supportive Housing (PH-PSH)

Two-Year Budget: \$504,000

Anticipated Requests for HUD Exceptions and Special Conditions: TPCH plans to submit the following requests for regulatory exceptions for project(s) funded under this service area. If approved by HUD, these exceptions and

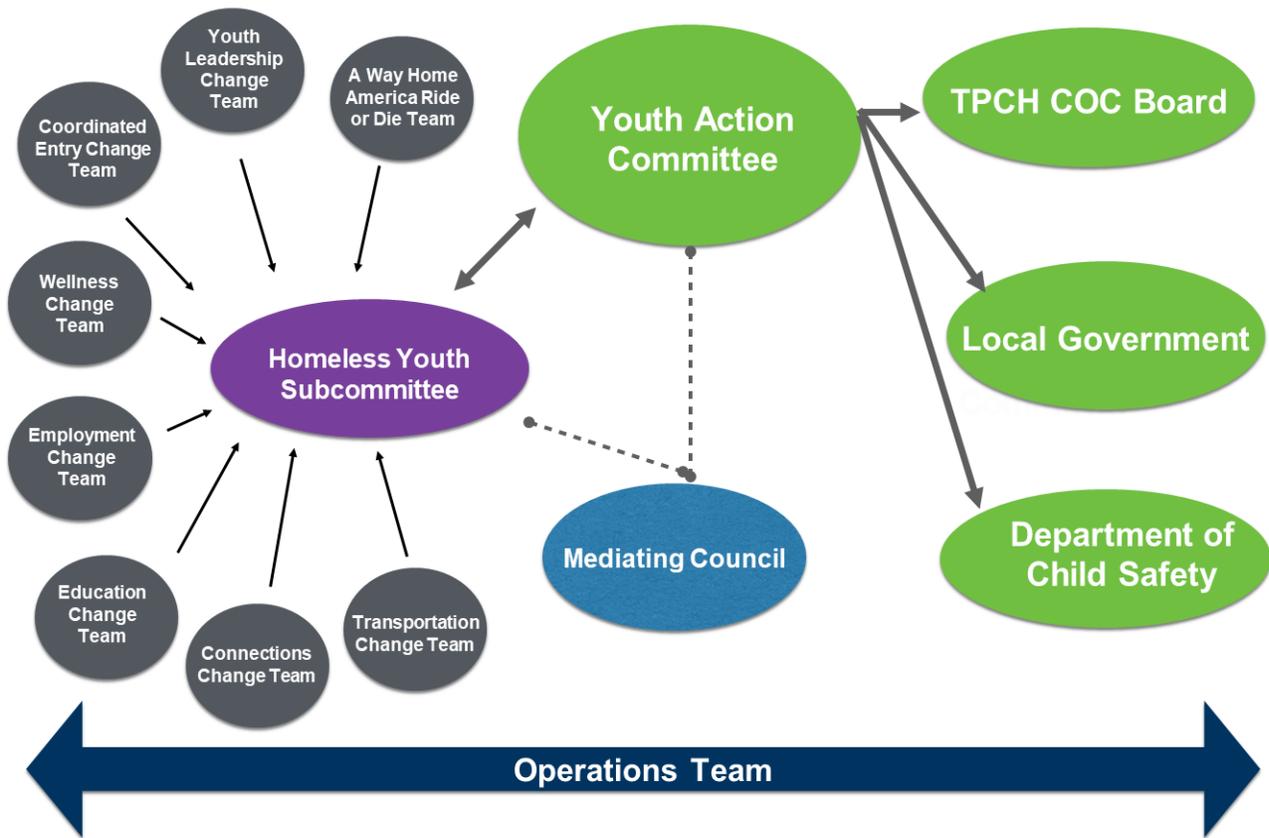
conditions will increase the capacity of projects to successfully mitigate risk of episodic homelessness and prevent further housing and service assistance need among youth experiencing homelessness.

1. Exception to 24 CFR 578.53(b)(3) permitting the project(s) to provide on-going aftercare services for up to 24 months enabling youth to access post-participation support and receive the low-level case management required to access mainstream housing vouchers.
2. Special condition allowing the delivery of Permanent Supportive Housing services to youth who do not meet HUD's chronic homelessness or Dedicated Plus eligibility requirements but who are assessed through standard screening procedures as at highest risk of chronic homelessness without intensive and non-time-limited housing support.

# GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The Tucson/Pima YHDP initiative is governed through the shared decision-making and leadership of multiple planning bodies coordinated by a community Operations Team and guided by the TPCH Youth Action Committee and CoC Board.

## Tucson/Pima YHDP Governance Structure



The YHDP Operations Team, comprised of agency leads from Our Family Services, City of Tucson, Pima County, Youth on Their Own, Arizona Department of Education, Arizona Department of Child Safety, University of Arizona Southwest Institute for Research on Women, and Youth Action Committee members engage necessary systems to ensure partner involvement, goals completion and coordination with HUD Technical Assistance providers to meet all YHDP

expectations. The Operations Team plays a vital role in the YHDP initiative; however, has no independent decision-making authority except when such authority is delegated by the Youth Action Committee and Homeless Youth Subcommittee.

The Homeless Youth Subcommittee coordinates providers of education and homeless services for youth to plan for outreach, prevention, education, and

evaluation of homeless youth programs. Community partners in the justice, workforce, wellness, education, and child welfare sectors provide input and feedback on youth homelessness in their respective areas and will continue to provide ongoing feedback and consultation for program implementation and system improvement efforts throughout and beyond the YHDP initiative.

The Youth Action Committee provides guidance and policy recommendations on the implementation, administration and oversight of services impacting youth experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Their work includes:

- Providing a youth voice in decision-making within the CoC.
- Participating in the development and design of funding solicitations for youth homelessness projects.
- Integrating youth input throughout the CoC and coordinating youth focused activities with other committees, work groups, the HMIS Lead Agency, and the Collaborative Applicant/CoC Lead Agency.
- Overseeing the activities of the Homeless Youth Subcommittee.

Under the approved YHDP governance structure, all decisions require joint approval by the Homeless Youth Subcommittee and Youth Action Committee. Ad hoc mediating councils are convened as necessary to resolve impasses in which the Youth Action Committee and Homeless Youth Subcommittee are unable to reach consensus. Mediating Councils are issue-specific and comprised of 3 representatives selected by the Homeless Youth Subcommittee and 4 representatives selected by the Youth Action Committee.

Mediating Council sessions are facilitated by a mutually agreed upon neutral outside party and staffed by representative(s) from the CoC's Collaborative Applicant and/or HMIS Lead as appropriate. Ad hoc Mediating Councils are dissolved once consensus decisions are made. The Council meeting is facilitated by a mutually agreed upon neutral outside party and staffed by a representative of the TPCH Board or Collaborative Applicant/CoC Lead Agency.

TPCH Board approval is additionally required for CoC approval of the YHDP Coordinated Community Plan and any decisions which impact other areas of the CoC (changes to TPCH Written Standards, Coordinated Entry processes, project performance metrics, etc.)

# CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

The YHDP Operations Team will implement a continuous quality improvement (CQI) process in collaboration with the Youth Action Committee to help ensure success of the YHDP coordinated planning effort and related projects. This CQI process will allow the YHDP Operations Team and Youth Action Committee to regularly assess the ongoing implementation of the coordinated community plan to identify needed revisions or updates and make necessary changes along the way.

At the project level, utilization of the CQI process will help the YHDP Operations Team and Youth Action Committee monitor implementation of new and updated homeless assistance projects serving homeless youth, and ensure the operation of projects aligns with the vision, values, concepts, and goals of this coordinated community plan. Details about the CQI processes are below.

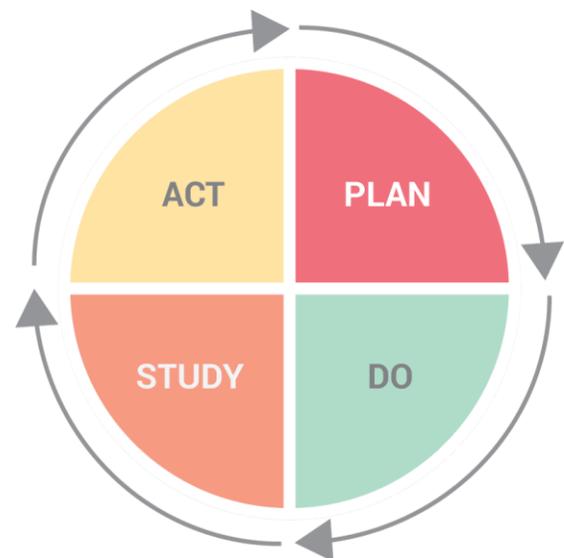
## CCP PROGRESS

The YHDP Operations Team will meet quarterly to review progress on implementation of the CCP and correlated impacts on local system performance. This review will include:

- CCP stakeholder feedback;
- YHDP Action Team deliverables; and
- System level performance data including:
  - Number of youth assisted with homeless prevention and outcomes for those youth;

- Number of homeless youth identified (sheltered vs. unsheltered);
- Length of time homeless for youth;
- Exits to permanent housing; and
- Utilization of housing and service pathways within the youth homelessness response system; and
- Returns to homelessness.

Results will be shared with the full Youth Action Committee and CoC Performance Evaluation and Monitoring Committee for review, and the YHDP Operations Team will conduct semi-annual presentations to the CoC Board, various CoC Committees, and the YHDP stakeholders related to system performance impacts, opportunities for improvement, and emerging system-level strategies.



## CCP REVIEW AND UPDATES

The YHDP Operations Team and Youth Action Committee will conduct an annual joint review of the CCP, progress to date, and the current state of youth homelessness in the region. This annual review will include updates on all planned goals, objectives, and action steps; as well as the identification of emerging or unanticipated opportunities to accelerate local efforts to prevent and end youth homelessness.

The joint committee will issue proposed revisions to the full YHDP stakeholder group and collect feedback and recommendations. A final set of revisions, based on all feedback received, will be submitted to the Youth Action Committee and CoC Board for approval. Upon approval, the annual CCP update will be published and shared with local youth agencies, Continuum of Care members, YHDP stakeholders, local leaders, and HUD.

## YHDP PROJECTS

A YHDP Project Evaluation Team with membership comprised of not less than 50% young people under the age of 25 will be appointed by the Youth Action Committee and the CoC Board prior to project implementation. The Project Evaluation Team will establish common collective impact measures to be used by YHDP projects for uniform data collection and reporting of project impacts related to sustainable housing, education, employment, health and well-being, permanent connections, and other key elements. YHDP projects will participate in monthly status calls to project highlights and concerns, and will submit written quarterly performance reports based on the selected common evaluation metrics. Quarterly reports will be reviewed by the Project Evaluation Team and provided in

summary form to the full Youth Action Committee and CoC Board. Specifically, the Project Evaluation Team will assess:

- Performance based on common measures and YHDP performance goals;
- Opportunities to replicate high-performing approaches and promote peer learning within the YHDP community of practice and other youth projects;
- Training and technical assistance needs.
- Corrective action resulting from non-compliance and/or non-cooperation with YHDP community efforts.

The Youth Action Committee will additionally convene focus groups at its discretion and not less than annually to gather youth perspectives on project services, identify unmet service needs and gaps in system coordination, and to examine other issues or successes to inform continuous quality improvement.

## INFORMAL COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION ACTIVITIES

The YHDP initiative offers an unique opportunity to engage and energize local providers, system leaders, and young people around the common aims of addressing and ending youth homelessness. The YHDP will conduct frequent informal collaboration and coordination activities to strengthen peer relationships, promote information sharing, and foster YHDP stakeholder collaboration. The “soft” impacts of these activities are expected to create incremental improvements in YHDP implementation and achievement of CCP objectives while also promoting enduring partnerships beyond the YHDP implementation period.

# SIGNATURE PAGE

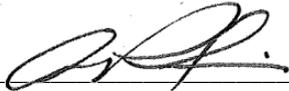
This Coordinated Community Plan is submitted by the Tucson Pima Collaboration to End Homelessness on behalf of the Tucson/Pima Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project. The undersigned attest that this plan represents our community's shared goals and strategies to prevent and end youth homelessness in Pima County, Arizona.

  
Stephanie Santiago, Member  
TPCH Youth Action Committee

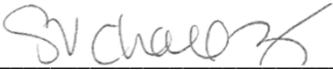
4/1/20  
Date

  
Elizabeth Morales, Director  
City of Tucson Housing & Community Development Department

4/1/2020  
Date

  
Arnold Palacios, Director  
Pima County Community Services, Employment & Training Department

3-10-20  
Date

  
Silvia Chavez, State Coordinator Homeless Education Program  
Arizona Department of Education

3/25/20  
Date

  
Robert Navarro, Assistant Director  
Arizona Department of Child Safety

3-25-2020  
Date

  
Beth Morrison, Chief Executive Officer  
Our Family Services (YHDP Lead Agency)

3/17/2020  
Date

  
Claudia Powell, Board Chair  
Tucson Pima Collaboration to End Homelessness

3/26/20  
Date