

YYA Homelessness Committee Notes

October 21, 2021

4:00-5:30pm

Present: Phil Ringwood–Dial/Self, Shelby Dempsey-BCRHA, Simone Barrows-YAB, Levi Solano-Jimenez-YAB, Ben Hernandez-Kliman-YAB, Stacy Parsons- McKinney-Vento Liaison, Lydia Davis- CAPV Youth Programs, Georgia Welch-CAPV YAB/Youth Programs, Lisa Sirabella-Community Member, Marie Gates-MHA, Michele LaFleur-CAPV CoC, Heather Welty-CAPV Youth Programs, Olivia-Gilbert-Lilly-YAB, Justin King-DYS, Shaundell Diaz-CAPV, CoC Teri Koopman-CAPV CoC

Welcome & Introductions/Check-Ins (Simone)

YHDP Project & CoC Updates

Dial/Self (Phil)

- Under YHDP, Dial/Self (DS) operates a 4-bed Rapid Rehousing (RRH) Project
- Four YYA are actively referred-2 are housed and 2 are in housing search
- DS is partnering with the other YHDP projects to provide supports for participants

Gandara (Shaundell)

- Gandara operates a joint Transitional Housing (6 slots)/RRH (12 slots) Project
- Four YYA are housed and one is enrolled in MHA's Permanent Supporting Housing (PSH) Project
- Their RRH program currently has two openings which will be discussed at the next YYA Case Conferencing meeting

MHA (Marie)

- MHA operates a PSH (8 slots for YYA with Disabilities) and a RRH (6 slots)/Housing Navigator Project
- PSH currently has 8 participants-3 are housed, 1 is in process of being house, and the rest are in housing search
- The project lead for RRH/Housing Navigation moved out of state and is working remotely until a replacement is identified
- MHA hired a new supervisor, Olivia Bernstein, to oversee both PSH & RRH/Navigation Projects
- Marie believes at least 4 YYA are in RRH-1 is housed, 1 is going to be housed & some are on the Housing Navigators list

CoC's YHDP Updates (Teri)

As of 10/19/2021:

- Total Number of Youth Referred: 35
- Total Number of Youth Housed: 9 Housed

- Total Number of Youth Currently on By Names List (BNL): 74
 - *including 10 YYA who are currently listed “no contact” and are slated to be re-categorized within the next 6 months if no contact is established*

Youth Action Board Updates (Levi)

- The Youth Action Board (YAB) met with DCF to discuss their proposed care package project (preparing gift bags for youth transitioning out of DCF care)
 - DCF appeared interested and will discuss what items are wanted/needed with social workers
 - YAB is aiming to have care packages ready for Valentine’s Day
- Building Bridges met and held a discussion on gender pronouns and gender assumptions
- Discord (the YABS group-chat platform) is up and running; Building Bridges participants were invited to join
- There has been discussion about having an open house-CAPV is opening a resiliency hub in Northampton
 - Lisa inquired whether the youth are chronically homeless
 - Marie noted that in YHDP youth can receive services if they are at-risk; there are not as many youth who meet HUD’s chronically homeless guidelines but its more prevalent than people think & many have mental health or substance abuse issues
 - Phil noted that most nights in Hampshire County youth have needed emergency shelter; DS has a dedicated Case Manager for this region and they have reached their caseload limit

Data Updates-EOHHS Homeless Youth Grant Projects (Phil)

- In addition to YHDP funding, CAPV is also the pass through for EOHHS funds for Region 1
- Primary youth service providers are Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority (BCRHA), Louison House, and DS
- EOHHS funds support the YAB, address a wider YYA age range, are highly flexible (versus HUD), allows us to support the annual youth count, and provides funding for emergency shelter, outreach, and prevention
- Shared highlights from Owen Wallace’s “Lightening Round Data Analysis” presentation which graphs trends from July 2019 – present
 - YYAs who identify as People of Color (POC), or LGBTQ+ make up a disproportionately higher percentage of our total YYA served-40% identify as POC and 32% as LGBTQ+ - compared to the general population; According to census data only 8% in this region identify as POC and 4% as LGBTQ+
 - Marie noted that individuals experiencing homeless are undercounted in the census
 - Phil reported that efforts are being made to get more individuals experiencing homelessness to respond to the census; questioned whether the discrepancy in percentages would make up this difference

State’s Homeless Youth Awareness Campaign-HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT (Teri)

- Commences: 11/1/21 for Homeless Youth Awareness Month; runs through January

- Goal: To get young people at risk of, or experiencing, housing instability to self-identify when they need help and connect them to existing and reliable resources that can address their needs
- Approximately 70 media-posters (8.8x11" and 11x17") will be sent to each region
- Campaign was guided by focus groups-YYA want a phone number to call so state is listing 211 and a link to the mass.gov website "Path to hope"
- 211 has statewide list of YSP service provider contacts for emergency shelter needs (including our CoC's EOHHS providers)
- State is hoping YABs will take poster distribution on as a project
- EOHHS also emailed event suggestions for Regions/YABS and a Press Release Template
- Regionally, State is sending posters to all 3 EOHHS providers plus CAPV/YAB
- Marie feels it is a good campaign but doesn't like the term "youth"-prefers "Youth and Young Adult" with age range given that we provide services for YYA up to 25
- Teri will inquire whether the posters can be modified or whether we can modify an electronic document
- Lydia reported that the youth are interested in meeting up and putting posters up at CAPV offices
- Marie requested that posters also be mailed to MHA
- Phil suggested tying into the national Green Light campaign; will discuss interest in events with board and noted that his is a yearly occurrence
- Stacy noted that 211 is terrible in their region and strongly suggested highlighting a local connection
- There was no interest in forming a PR group to further discuss ideas and events tying into the state's campaign

CQI Process and YHDP Project Evaluation (Teri)

Demonstration Period Evaluation Presentation

- Reviewed CQI Process
- Demonstration Period Goals and Objectives are comprised of:
 - YHDP/Planning Team Goals from CCP
 - Standard CoC evaluation measures (for CoC's annual monitoring)
- Combined Goals and Objectives from Demonstration Period Project Evaluation Spreadsheet divided into three evaluation areas
 - Youth Surveys
 - Data
 - Policy/Administration
- What's needed to commence this year 1 evaluation is to divide into three small groups to work on the three evaluation area-surveys, data, and policies/admin
- Michele reported that we have received approximately 10 surveys to date (all pre-service surveys); Survey administration is on-going
 - Marie noted that some youth are having problems with connecting to the internet and can't use the ipads that CoC provided for the surveys; had previously asked if the surveys could be completed via email
 - Michele will follow-up on the email option

- Stacy asked what the YAB was taking on in the evaluation-recalls the Planning Committee having lots of conversations about making sure the YAB had information in advance and enough time to review and provide feedback/edits but wasn't sure where those conversations ended
- Phil recalled that the data would be co-reviewed by YAB and YYA and that enough time had to be allotted to make that happen
- Questions were asked about evaluation deadlines; It was Teri's understanding that the deadlines were more flexible-not like the scheduled APR deadlines
- Stacy noted that since we have new players (staff, YAB and Committee members) all need to be caught up and know the plan so we can get to the point where we have fun conversations
- No participants felt ready to sign onto one of the three evaluation groups
- Marie thought sending a mass email to entire YYA committee with a 1-2 page summary of the ask was reasonable so everyone (including the YAB) has something in front of them that they can review and has time to think about it
- YHDP providers questioned whether they should be a part of the evaluation groups as they are not included in the standard CoC evaluation process as it may impact future funding; It was Teri's understanding that they could be included but Michele will clarify with Keleigh Pereira

Announcements

- None

Next Meeting: Thursday, November 18, 4:00 – 5:30 pm