



COLORADO
Department of Local Affairs

Office of Homeless Youth Services &
Advisory Committee on Homeless Youth
2014 - 2015 Annual Report



Executive Summary

January 15, 2015

I am pleased to present the 2015 Annual Report for the Office of Homeless Youth Services (OHYS) located within the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, Division of Housing.

Homelessness causes severe trauma to young people, disrupting their relationships, putting their health and safety at risk. Youth experiencing homelessness are more likely to have physical and mental health problems, and experience hunger and malnutrition. Emotional distress, and decreased academic achievement are also more common. Many of these youth experience deep poverty, instability and exposure to domestic violence before becoming homeless, and homelessness increases their vulnerability including human trafficking. Any young person who lacks a safe and stable home is unacceptable.

The following report represents a shared community vision and statewide commitment to prevent and end homelessness in Colorado by 2020. In order to promote accountability and coordination of services this report is aligned with the Colorado Revised Statutes 24-32-723. Accordingly, the OHYS consulted with the Colorado Department of Education and Colorado Department of Human Services to put forward this report.

During the last couple of years, DOH has met with many of the ACHY members and listened to youth and youth serving agencies. All of these important conversations have informed and will continue to guide the work of the OHYS. With the support and leadership of ACHY the OHYS accomplished the 2014 goals and provided the direction of the 2015 Strategic Plan. The progress and recommendations for the plan are presented throughout the year at the ACHY quarterly meetings for consensus.

More needs to be known about the costs associated with youth homelessness but we know that high rates of medical and behavioral health care, school drop outs and incarceration are costly. Most homeless youth have limited options for housing, income, and other social support systems. There are many opportunities to build on system improvements to youth transitioning into self-sufficiency. Identifying the most vulnerable youth experiencing homelessness and improved access to health care, housing, and supports are critical strategies in ending and preventing homelessness among youth. In light of the very real problems that homeless youth experience, there are few state or federal funded programs for homeless youth.

The good news is there is no shortage of work going on around homeless youth issues in Colorado. The opportunity for positive change lies within the coordinated efforts across systems. This past year there has been a major effort in coordinating and aligning partnerships and goals to improve outcomes for youth. The long term goal will be a system of coordinated and integrated services, opportunities and supports for all youth ages 9 to 25 in Colorado to ensure that youth are safe, connected, educated and are contributing.

Sincerely,

Pat Coyle, Director
Division of Housing

Overview

The Office of Homeless Youth Services (OHYS) continues to provide information, coordination, and support services for infrastructure around homeless youth resources around the State. It also collaborates with leaders from State and local government, private nonprofit organizations, federal departments, homeless and formerly homeless youth, and other key stakeholders in the communities to address local and state needs surrounding youth homelessness. The Office of Homeless Youth Services seeks to:

- Identify and remove obstacles to the provision of services;
- Improve the quality of services provided to homeless youth;
- Reduce needless expenditures caused by the provision of overlapping services;
- Identify housing and supportive services funding resources available to entities serving homeless youth.

The statutory requirements of the Office of Homeless Youth Services include:

- To provide information, coordination, and technical assistance as may be necessary to reduce needless expenditures associated with the provision of overlapping services and to improve the quality of services provided to homeless youth;
- To identify both procedural and substantive obstacles to the provision of services and to make recommendations to the entities specified above concerning procedural, regulatory, or statutory changes necessary to remove such obstacles;
- To obtain information from service providers concerning known services available for the homeless youth population in the state of Colorado and to post such information on a website on the internet;
- To develop, maintain, and make available a listing of all rights and organizations that may be relevant to the homeless youth population in the state of Colorado, including but not limited to a listing of legal, educational, and victims' rights and organizations related thereto;
- To obtain information concerning known funding sources available for the homeless youth population in the state of Colorado;
- To work with entities to identify issues concerning sharing of information in providing services to homeless youth and to facilitate resolution of such information-sharing issues; and
- To prepare and submit a written annual report for the Governor and the General Assembly concerning the performance of the OHYS.

The OHYS created the statewide Advisory Committee on Homeless Youth (ACHY) to assist with implementation of the Homeless Youth Services Act. The ACHY is made up of key stakeholder organizations and individuals representing federal, state, and local governments, non-profit service agencies, faith based agencies, foundations, and homeless or formerly homeless youth. Their passion and knowledge of the issue of homeless youth is invaluable to preventing the cycle of homelessness for Colorado youth.

History of the Homeless Youth Initiative

<i>2002</i>	<p>The Legislature passed the Homeless Youth Services Act (House Bill 02-1159) in response to the overwhelming and diverse needs of homeless youth in Colorado. The intent of this legislation was to create a focus on the cooperation among agencies providing services to homeless youth statewide to break down the barriers and provide a seamless collaboration, and effective services to fully serve the youth by facilitating interagency collaboration. This resulted in an ongoing collaborative effort between organizations all over the state to identify gaps, remove barriers, improve access and share information.</p>
<i>2004</i>	<p>Initially, the Office of Homeless Youth Services (OHYS) was housed under the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. On May 21st, 2004 the Governor Bill Owens signed House Bill 1107, authorizing the transfer of the Office of Homeless Youth Services from the Department of Public Health and Environment to the Department of Human Services (CDHS), Division of Supportive Housing and Homeless Programs (SHHP). A full time Homeless Youth Coordinator position was created and an Advisory Committee for Homeless Youth (ACHY) was convened in 2004 to assist with planning and implementation of the Statewide Homeless Youth Action Plan and assist OHYS in providing technical assistance to communities throughout Colorado.</p>
<i>2009</i>	<p>The State of Colorado and Bridging the Gap at Mile High United Way (MHUW) formed a partnership to manage the Family Unification Program (FUP). The partnership resulted in affordable housing for homeless youth with foster care involvement coordinated with a broad array of supportive services.</p>
<i>2011-2014</i>	<p>House Bill 1230 passed, authorizing the transfer of the Office of Homeless Youth Services from the Department of Human Services (CDHS), Division of Supportive Housing and Homeless Programs (SHHP) to the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, Division of Housing (DOH). This was a result of the consolidation of SHHP and DOH's Housing Choice Voucher programs in July 2011. These changes allow DOH to focus on connecting services to housing. Any solution to end homelessness must target the supply of safe, affordable housing as well as access to supports and services.</p>

Positive Youth Development Plan and the OHYS

House Bill 2013-1239 mandates a comprehensive Statewide Youth Development Plan “in order to quantify existing and needed services and to align existing limited resources to help promote positive youth development.”

OFFICE OF HOMELESS YOUTH SERVICES

- The State’s Office of Homeless Youth Services (OHYS), within the Division of Housing Programs, was created by the Colorado State Legislature through the Homeless Youth Services Act (C.R.S. 26-5.9) to improve services for runaway and homeless youth through early intervention and prevention programs, intervention with already-homeless youth, and independent housing options.
- The Advisory Committee on Homeless Youth Services, made up of key stakeholder organizations and individuals representing federal, state and local governments, non-profits service agencies, faith based organizations, funders and homeless and formerly homeless in conjunction with OHYS created and is implementing a state action plan to reduce youth experiencing homelessness. The plan exists to increase and improve collaboration between state and local agencies in the public and private sectors. It builds upon the federal strategic plan, Opening Doors, developed by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), and the state strategic plan, Pathways Home Colorado.

OHYS/ACHY MISSION STATEMENT

To prevent and address youth experiencing homelessness by improving the quality, availability, and accessibility of services, supports and relationships that will provide solutions youth experiencing homelessness and those at risk of homelessness

VISION STATEMENT

Public, private, faith-based agencies, youth and families working together to prevent and address youth experiencing homelessness in Colorado

VALUE STATEMENT

*In accordance with our Mission and Vision, we believe that every youth should have the opportunity to be
safe, healthy, educated, connected and contributing (CO9to25)*

CORE OUTCOMES FOR YOUTH

Stable housing, permanent connections, education and employment and social/emotional wellbeing
(USICH)

INFORMATION & DATA

NATIONAL AND COLORADO

National:

- On any given night over 1500 youth in Colorado are living in shelters, staying with family or friends or sleeping without a roof over their heads (National Runaway Safe Line).
- 37% of youth exited foster care without a permanent family:
 - More than 1 in 5 became homeless after age 18.
 - Only 58% graduated high school by age 19.
 - 71% of young women were pregnant by age 21.
 - At the age of 24, only half were employed.
 - Fewer than 3% earned a college degree by age 25.
 - 1 in 4 became involved in the justice system within two years of having left the foster care system (Chapin Hall, Midwest Study of Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth: Outcomes at Age 27.)
- Taxpayers and communities pay on average \$300,000 for every youth who ages out of foster care in social costs (e.g., public assistance, incarceration) over the course of their lifetime (Jim Casey Foundation, http://jimcaseyyouth.org/sites/default/files/SuccessBeyond18InfographicHandout_05_27_14.pdf).

Colorado:

- According to the 2013 Point in Time survey, 921 youth and young adults between the ages of 13 and 24 were homeless in the Denver Metro Area representing a 19% increase from the prior year. And, 844 youth and young adults were homeless outside of the Denver Metro Area.
- Colorado Service Provider Data:
 - Urban Peak, serving Denver Metro, Colorado Springs and statewide served 2,781 youth experiencing homelessness.
 - Comitis serving Denver Metro sheltered 152 youth and 1,895 families experiencing homelessness with their children.
 - Attention Homes serving Boulder, Broomfield, Gilpin, Larimer and Weld counties sheltered 91 youth in their emergency shelter; provided 1,296 transportation, vocational, housing, mental health, legal, and medical referrals; provided 5,947 meals through shelter and drop-in services; and made 2,683 contacts through street outreach.
 - The House serving Grand Junction and Mesa County sheltered 56 youth.
 - The Colorado Rural Collaborative for Homeless Youth serving Alamosa and the San Luis Valley, Garfield, Huerfano, Moffat, Montezuma and Montrose counties served 257 youth ages 16 to 21 from 2010 through 2013. (Insert Basic Center data).
 - Posada serving Pueblo served 117 homeless youth through its drop in center.
- 23,293 Colorado students were homeless in 2012-2013(Colorado Department of Education).

GAPS AND PRIORITIES

GAPS

Housing Gaps:

- Lack of supportive service funding for housing case management (a home is not enough).
- Lack of Housing Continuum – options for housing.
- Although emergency shelter for unaccompanied homeless youth under the age of 18 exists there are strict limitations placed on length of stay.
- Shelter for young adults 21-25 who are afraid to access adult shelters
- Other than the foster care system, there is very limited supportive housing for unaccompanied youth.

Housing Challenges:

- Lack of funds for deposits and no credit history.
- Landlords are reluctant to rent to youth and young adults due to age.
- Section 8 payment standard is too low for rental market.
- Youth who have criminal background histories.
- Long waiting lists for apartments.
- Youth and Young Adults:
 - Do Not have enough money for security deposit/application/holding fee
 - Do Not have a credit/rental history
 - Do Not have income
 - Do Not like being alone (remember when you were 18 years old)
- Accessing housing can be a cumbersome and a difficult process for youth who are homeless to navigate.
- Lack of life skills, healthy relationships, and money management

PRIORITIES

- Establish a complete Continuum of Housing by expanding the reach and effectiveness of housing options:
 - Shelter -short term emergency housing that usually last up to 21 days.
 - Host Family Homes.
 - Transitional “practice housing” to build the ability for young people to enter mainstream housing.
 - Single-Site programs with supportive services.
 - Scattered-Site programs We must identify a funding stream for coaching, case management, care management and adult/peer mentors
 - Community Living, independent living that gently transitions young people towards independence
- Designated funding for runaway and homeless youth to provide housing, coaching, and case management.
- Low barrier Behavioral Health services that are responsive and the right place and time.
- Hire Youth Leaders/(Focus on Soft Skills).
- Braid funding streams to maximize time for each youth to achieve self-sufficiency.
- Provision of Trauma-Informed Care services.
- Smooth transitions for youth exiting the foster care or juvenile justice systems.

- SOAR Practitioner specific to youth.
- Prevention/discharge planning to prevent systems involved youth from becoming homeless.
- Asset Building Opportunities.
- Relationships that are not time limited/permanent connections.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Current Initiatives

Host Family Home:

- Increase shelter options for runaway and homeless youth through the use of Host Family Homes.
- Increase capacity for those serving older youth especially those without stable housing.
- Webinars and Users' Manual
- Host Family Home Pilot.

Tenant Based Rental Assistance: Safe, Affordable Housing = Education Success:

- 24 months of rental assistance to assist families that are identified as homeless by McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaisons
- Working with Local Housing Authorities and School Districts
- Educational Outcomes

Nurse Family Partnership:

- Provides services for pregnant and parenting mothers who are enrolled in Mile High United Ways' Bridging the Gap program. An in-home visiting nurse provides medical advice and support to young parents during pregnancy and during the first two years of their baby's life so they can successfully parent their children.

Bridging the Gap:

- Family Unification Program (FUP) vouchers are administered through a partnership between the Department of Local Affairs/Division of Housing and Bridging the Gap at Mile High United Way and supported by an expanding network of collaborating agencies.
- Provide 18 months of subsidized housing and care management to eligible former foster youth.

SOAR

- SOAR works to assist homeless with disabilities obtain Social Security Benefits. Nationally about 37 percent of individuals that apply for benefits are approved on initial application and appeals take an average of two years to complete. Participants report 71% approval rate in an average of 99 days.

Federal Policy:

- The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA), administered by the Family and Youth Services Bureau, part of the Department of Health and Human Services' Administration, was enacted in 1974 and is the only federal law that focuses on unaccompanied, homeless youth. RHYA authorizes federal funding for the Basic Center Program, Transitional Living Program, and Street Outreach Program— to assist runaway and homeless youth.
- The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987 was the first major federal legislative response to homelessness. Title VII of the Act includes provisions to ensure the enrollment, attendance, and success of homeless children and youth in school. Under the Act schools must work to eliminate any barriers, such as transportation, that may prohibit students from attending school, and are required to appoint a liaison to work with homeless students and their families.
- The Chaffee Foster Care Independence Program provides states with funding to support and provide services to youth who are expected to age out of foster care as well as former foster care youth ages 18 to 21. Funds from the program can be used for housing, educational services and independent living services.
- The Fostering Connections Act of 2008 increased federal funds available to states to extend assistance to foster youth up until age 21 as long as the youth is in school, working or has a medical condition that prevents them from participating in those activities. Services can include housing assistance, vocational and college help, and counseling.

State Policy:

- *Early Intervention and Prevention Programs:* Many youth become homeless as a result of family problems and financial difficulties. As a result, young people often lack the necessary supports to help them find jobs, obtain an education and reunite with their families. Implement a homelessness prevention program that includes counseling, family reunification services, and rent assistance.
- *Intervene with Already-Homeless Youth:* Homeless youth need access to services that will help them regain stability in their lives, such as obtaining a job and affordable housing. Provide homeless youth with access to educational outreach programs, job training and employment programs, transitional living programs, and services for mental health and life skills trainings
- *Independent Housing Options:* Expanding long-term housing options and providing supportive services —such as food, clothing and counseling— are examples of ways to help homeless youth. Create housing programs that respond to the diverse needs of homeless youth. Youth housing programs include group homes, residential treatment, host homes, shared homes, youth shelters, community-based transitional living programs and scattered site independently living. It is important to note that youth housing programs are more cost-effective than alternative out-of-home placements such as juvenile corrections facilities, treatment centers or jail. Funding is needed to implement transitional living programs and provide outreach services to keep youth in transition off the streets.
- *Enhance Services Provided by Juvenile Corrections and Foster Care Programs:* Each year, roughly 24,000 youth age out of foster care with little or no financial and housing resources. In addition, there is little attention paid to the housing needs of youth leaving juvenile correction facilities.

Strategies

- A. Increase capacity, knowledge, leadership, and collaboration
 - Designated funding for runaway and homeless youth to provide housing, case management, supportive services and flexible funding i.e.: transportation & cell phones.
 - Develop standards and strategies to increase access of permanent, positive connections through appropriate Mentor, Navigator and Transitional Specialist support.
 - Align the McKinney Vento per pupil allocation formula funding levels with the actual school need (number of K-12 students experiencing homelessness) and find ways to make it more equitable, especially taking into consideration the needs resulting from the recent natural disasters in Colorado.

- B. Increase access to housing units through the continuum of supportive housing
 - Obtain additional funds for rental assistance for young adults experiencing homelessness or in jeopardy of becoming homeless in connection with supportive services that allows for a variety of housing choices and strategies.
 - Integrate behavioral health care services with youth homeless assistance housing and programs that are clinically and developmentally appropriate that are delivered with trauma informed, culturally responsive, and low barrier.
 - Obtain additional funds for the Family Unification Program that will improve the transition planning with a specific emphasis on those aging out of foster care and the juvenile justice system.
 - Create a stronger relationship with researched informed and best practice home visiting programs, targeting young adults providing funds to hire case managers to help with the linkage of housing, nurses and other services.
 - Increase shelter options for runaway and homeless youth through the use of Host Family Homes established through legislation.

- C. Increase access to economic security
 - Obtain funds for a statewide youth specific SOAR practitioner.
 - Sustain and expand current paid internships and job skills programs for homeless youth that include financial literacy and asset building.
 - Collaborate with businesses to guarantee internships to homeless youth.
 - Increase the FASFA completion rate for homeless youth to equal that of their housed peers.
 - Increase in post-secondary enrollment of homeless youth to match the statewide average.

The Colorado Homeless Youth Action Plan contains key themes/goals and strategies, as well as tactics that will be facilitated through the Office of Homeless Youth Services (OHYS) to stabilize unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness, and those at-risk. OHYS will act as a convener, coordinator, and collaborator with government, youth, service providers, foundations, non-profit organizations, and other important partners to strategically and effectively address homelessness among Colorado youth. The key themes/goals and strategies of the OHYS strategic plan include components of the previous OHYS action plan, and are in alignment with the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness’s Opening Doors, the federal strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness, and Pathways Home Colorado, the Colorado state plan to address homelessness.

Office Of Homeless Youth Services
Vision Statement
<i>Public, private, faith-based agencies, youth and families working together to prevent and address youth experiencing homelessness in Colorado</i>
Mission Statement
The Colorado Homeless Youth Action Plan is designed to address youth experiencing homelessness in Colorado <i>by improving the quality, availability, and accessibility of housing and services, supports and relationships that will provide solutions to homeless youth and those at risk of homelessness</i>
Value Statement
In accordance with our Mission and Vision, we believe that every youth should have the opportunity to be safe, healthy, educated, connected and contributing (CO9to25) Stable housing, permanent connections, education and employment and social/emotional wellbeing (USICH)

Summary of the 2014 OHYS Action Plan Outcomes

Objective	Outcomes
Increase Capacity, Knowledge and Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The OHYS, in conjunction with the ACHY, provided expertise, leadership and recommendations regarding youth experiencing homelessness as a member of Pathways to Success, Colorado Positive Youth Development Plan steering committees and Colorado 9 to 25 Leadership Team. ➤ Hosted the Colorado Homeless Youth Awareness Month kick-off event where 14 young people offered an amazing performance.
Increase Access to Supportive Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 2 youth serving agencies participated in the Permanent Supportive Housing Toolkit. ✓ Hosted 6 Host Home webinars and certified 4 Host Family Homes ✓ Provided technical assistance to youth serving agencies on strategies to include unaccompanied youth in the 2015 Point in Time.
Increase Access to Mainstream Benefits, Education and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Colorado Division of Housing hired to 2 youth interns sponsored through MHUW. ✓ Enrolled over 100 youth in supportive housing through the FUP program. ✓ Partnered with DBS to host Youth SOAR training and applied for a Youth SOAR pilot grant

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE OFFICE OF HOMELESS YOUTH 2015 STRATEGIC PLAN

KEY PRIORITY #1:

The focus will be to build capacity statewide for a more robust 2016 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count for unaccompanied youth in Colorado. Schools are the primary venue to identify homeless children K-12 in Colorado, but this does not capture those not attending school. Due to being unaccompanied and homeless an untold number of youth are not receiving the benefits of education, health care, housing and other services for which they are eligible for.

GOAL	OUTCOME
POINT IN TIME & OTHER YOUTH COUNTS	INCREASE CAPACITY, KNOWLEDGE AND LEADERSHIP
QUARTER 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Coordinate efforts around the 2015 Youth Point in Time survey ➤ Conduct a youth PIT Debrief and meet with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) ➤ Improve strategies for counting youth by enhancing collaborations between CoCs, Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) providers, and the CDE ➤ Use Youth Count! to inform best practices on PIT
QUARTER 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide technical assistance on the integration of HHS's Runaway and Homeless Youth Management Information System (RHYMIS) with HUD's Homeless Management Information system (HMIS) ➤ Update the youth count guidebook ➤ Conduct youth focus groups to identify where youth experiencing homelessness congregate ➤ Coordinate a data system that is in alignment with the current database being used for the 25 Cities Initiative. ➤ Develop youth-specific methods, survey questions, and/or assessment tool for counting youth and collecting information consistently in order to have a more confident estimate of the numbers and characteristics of unaccompanied youth
QUARTER 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Begin training service providers for annual PIT ➤ Begin planning for the Colorado Homeless and Runaway Awareness Month kickoff event
QUARTER 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continue training and outreach regionally ➤ Create a social media campaign ➤ Host a youth magnet event ➤ Host a youth summit ➤ Host the Colorado Homeless and Runaway Awareness Month kickoff ➤ Conduct a post Point in Time count debrief

Point in Time Focused on Youth

The impact of the youth Point inTime (PIT) will better inform the scope of the problem and the need for resources. It will target homeless unaccompanied youth 18 - 24 or younger.

The goal of this initiative is to learn and implement promising strategies for conducting the following:

- 1) ***Collaborative PIT counts*** of unaccompanied homeless youth that engage Continuums of Care (CoC), Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) providers, local school districts (homeless liaisons), and other local stakeholders; and
- 2) ***credible PIT counts*** that gather reliable data on unaccompanied homeless youth.

What is the issue and why does it matter?

Historically unaccompanied youth have been undercounted. Reaching youth experiencing homelessness in PIT counts isn't easy. This information is needed to inform planning and funding. In order to reduce youth homelessness by 2020 we need to understand the scope of the problem.

What is being done to address the problem?

The Office of Homeless Youth Services (OHYS) will encourage communities to fully include homeless youth in local Point in Time (PIT) and will provide technical assistance to the CoC.

The OHYS will host Advisory Committee on Homeless Youth (ACHY) monthly meeting to discuss the planning and implementation of these goals. The OHYS will act as the liaison communicating and bringing updates from the workgroups back to the ACHY members during the quarterly meetings.

What changes will occur as of a result of this effort?

Improved efforts targeting unaccompanied youth will provide an opportunity for communities to increase their understanding of the problem.

Outcome

We will be able to confidently say that we gave our best effort towards counting unaccompanied youth. With a better understanding of the scope of the problem these efforts will create a baseline for needed resources/funding that help shape both policy and program interventions.

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE OFFICE OF HOMELESS YOUTH STRATEGIC PLAN

KEY PRIORITY #2:

The focus will be a system of "Coordinated Engagement" for homeless young adults. Coordinated Engagement will direct young people's access to housing and services and will place them in programs that have worked for other young people like them.

GOAL	OUTCOME
YOUTH COORDINATED ASSESSMENT AND HOUSING PLACEMENT SYSTEMS (CAHPS)	INCREASE ACCESS TO SUPPORTIVE HOUSING, MAINSTREAM BENEFITS, EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT
QUARTER 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bring together YTP partners to discuss creating a youth coordinated assessment pilot ➤ Research best practices from the Youth Count! states on Coordinated Assessment ➤ Partner with existing Coordinated Assessment and Housing Placement Systems (CAHPS) across the state to ensure alignment with the existing efforts and learn best practices ➤ Establish a leadership body for the Youth CAHPS ➤ Create a Youth Community Matching team that connects clients to service and housing resources
QUARTER 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop a clearly defined process for referrals that will match young adults with the most appropriate services and housing based on program capacity and eligibility
QUARTER 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop a standardized scoring process that will determine needs and will lead to a referral for housing and services ➤ Develop a housing inventory- DOH will provide vouchers and will request that other agencies contribute housing resources/vouchers to the pool. ➤ Work to enhance service delivery and coordination of case management by identifying agencies that can provide services
QUARTER 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Match youth with the most appropriate housing and services, as determined by the Youth Community Matching team ➤ Make recommendations regarding strategies that will improve the process for young adults to access low barrier Behavioral Health services

Coordinated Assessment Focused on Youth

The impact of the youth coordinated assessment is the ability to successfully engage, assess and transition young adults 18-24 experiencing homelessness to independence and permanent housing

The goal is to design a Youth Engagement/Coordinated Assessment that is meant to create an accessible and aligned system that offers supportive housing interventions.

What is the issue and why does it matter?

It has been our experience with this population that most young adults are not capable of successfully making the jump from temporary shelter to an independent living situation without supportive services.

What is being done to address the problem?

The YTP partnership will lead the design and launch of the Youth Coordinated Assessment pilot that plays an important role in moving towards a system that provides the right intervention at the right time.

The OHYS will host monthly meetings to discuss the planning and implementation of these goals. The OHYS will act as the liaison communicating and bringing news and updates from the work groups back to the ACHY during quarterly meetings.

What changes will occur as of a result of this effort?

Coordinated Engagement will direct young people's access to housing by applying a common strengths-based assessment and connecting them to programs that have worked for other young people like them.

Outcome

The plan is designed to bring about a measurable impact on young adults homelessness

- Young people receive services and successfully move into stable housing
- Increase housing options, particularly for youth with high barriers like mental illness or chemical dependence
- Develop community-based rental assistance and supportive services to help youth adults achieve housing stability and prevent a return to homelessness

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Data collected from local school districts across the state by the Colorado Department of Education indicates a 3.3 percent increase in homeless students from the 2012-2013 school year to the 2013-2014 school year. **In that same time period, the number of unaccompanied homeless youth (youth on their own, without a parent or guardian) identified and served in Colorado public schools decreased slightly from 1,989 to 1,958 youth.** Again, this doesn't capture the full extent of unaccompanied and homeless youth in Colorado—only the youth who are still enrolled and attending school. This is important because these youth are perhaps the most vulnerable, as they are dealing with the crises of homelessness without a safe, supportive parent or guardian.

Overall, the number of students experiencing homelessness has increased significantly. *During the 2013-14 school year, 24,062 students experiencing homelessness were identified and served in Colorado public schools, grades PK-12.* Based on end of year data collection counts submitted by Colorado public school districts, since the 2003-04 school year, the number of public school students experiencing homelessness in Colorado has more than tripled.

2013-2014	24,062		
2012-2013	23,293		
2011-2012	23,680		
2010-2011	21,487		
2009-2010	18,408		
2008-2009	15,834		
2007-2008	12,302		
2006-2007	11,954		
	12,689		
2005-2006	(Hurricane Katrina/Rita School Year)		
2004-2005	9,309		
2003-2004	7,319		
Sheltered 2013-14	Doubled Up 2013-14	Unsheltered 2013-14	Hotels/Motels 2013-14
3755	17258	550	2499

For this purpose of this report, homeless youth are inclusive of the following terms and definitions:

Youth include people who are 24 years or younger.

Homeless/Unaccompanied Youth are youth in homeless situations who are not in the physical custody of their parents or guardian and lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, i.e. youth who stay at least on night in a place that is not their home because they could not stay at home, ran away from home, did not have a home, and/or stayed at a shelter, outdoors, in a car or public transportation, under a bridge, or in a temporary arrangement with another person (i.e., couch surfing).

Throw Away Youth are either youth who are asked or told to leave home by a parent or other household adult, without adequate, alternative housing, and expected to be out overnight; or youth who are away from home and are prevented from returning home by a parent or other household adult, without adequate, alternative housing, and expected to be out overnight.

Street Youth are youth who spend a lot of time in the streets and other areas that increase their risk of sexual exploitation, drinking and drug use.

Couch Surfing Youth describes situations where runaway or homeless youth are living in unstable and/or temporary living arrangements such as the couches or spare bedrooms of other people.

Doubled Up describes situations where homeless youth are either living with family, friends, or other non-relatives.

At Risk Youth are youth who are exiting a publicly funded institution or system of care or are living in housing that has characteristics associated with instability and an increased risk of homelessness (like weekly hotel and motels) and lacks sufficient resources or support networks to immediately obtain other safe and permanent housing.

LGBTQ is an abbreviation for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning.