

# Building Blocks of a Youth System

April 15, 2021

3-4:30 pm ET



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# Welcome!

- Using the chat: Tell us where you are from and your role in ending youth homelessness in your community
- Please use the chat throughout today's webinar to share your thoughts and questions!

**Objective for today:** Build understanding of the core components for planning and developing a youth homeless response system, including lessons learned from current YHDP communities and steps you can take now

# Agenda

- Welcome & Housekeeping
- Overview of the Building Blocks of a Youth System
- Presentations and Panel Discussions on:
  - Developing a Statement of Need
  - Building Community Partnerships
  - Designing Your Governance Structure
  - Developing a Youth Homelessness Action Plan
- Q&A

# Speakers

## Panelists

- Kathryn Primas (she/her), CoC Program Coordinator at Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County, YHDP Round 3
- Lisa Brooks (she/her), Youth Housing Initiative Coordinator at Coalition on Homelessness & Housing in Ohio (COHHIO), YHDP Rounds 1 and 3
- Marisol Atkins (she/her), Deputy Cabinet Secretary of the New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department, YHDP Round 2
- Lauren Leonardis (she/her), Independent Consultant and Director of the Boston YAB, YHDP Round 2

## Technical Assistance Providers

- Jen Best (she/her), ICF
- Alicia Lehmer (she/her), Homebase
- Lauren Leonardis (she/her), Independent Consultant



# Overview: Building Blocks of a Youth System



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# Youth System Overview

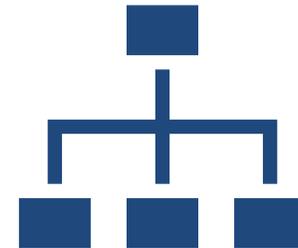
HUD has identified a number of key components and actions needed for the development of a strong youth homelessness response system, including:



**Statement of Need**



**Community Partnerships**



**Governance Structure**



**Action Plan**

Whether or not you are a YHDP community, can get started now on building out these key components of your youth system

# Coordinated Community Plan

- A statement of need, community partnerships, governance structure and action plan are key components of a community's Coordinated Community Plan (CCP) to prevent and end youth homelessness
- The CCP is the result of a comprehensive planning process that brings together diverse stakeholders to develop a coordinated community response to youth homelessness
- It reflects authentic youth engagement and voice, establishes a community-wide commitment to equity, and provides a framework for investment in youth-driven projects to respond to locally-defined challenges and needs
- For more information, see [Ending Youth Homelessness: YHDP Foundations & Beyond: Coordinated Community Plan](#)



# Authentic Youth Engagement

**Remember!** Youth and young adults who have experienced homelessness need to be engaged from the beginning as co-leaders in all aspects of building out your youth system.

*This work cannot not be effective or responsive to the needs of youth experiencing homelessness without their authentic engagement and leadership.*

# Equity

**Remember!** Equity needs to be centered in all efforts to prevent and end youth homelessness. Ensure diverse representation, voices, and intersectional experiences and identities are reflected in who is at the table, how decisions are made, and how solutions are designed in your community.

*This work cannot not be effective or responsive to the needs of youth experiencing homelessness without centering equity.*



# Key Component #1: Statement of Need



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# Why is a Statement of Need Important?

- A statement of need helps communities understand the scope, scale and intersectional characteristics and needs of youth and young adults (YYA) experiencing homelessness within their geographic area in order to effectively address youth homelessness
- It clearly identifies the gaps, challenges, and barriers experienced by youth at-risk of and experiencing homelessness, including risk factors for homelessness, disparate impact of experiences and interventions, and inequities and disparities experienced by populations of focus
- A statement of need provides crucial information for ***developing the right interventions to the right scale with the right amount of assistance to effectively prevent and end youth homelessness***

# Getting Started Now

- ✓ Begin collecting data on youth and young adults at risk of or experiencing homelessness, including pregnant and parenting youth, from sources within and beyond the homeless response system. Some potential data sources include:
  - Point-in-Time (PIT) Count
  - HMIS and Coordinated Entry
  - Project-level data on youth served
  - RHY-HMIS data
  - Census data on poverty levels
  - Local and/or State education data (depending on your geographic area)
  - Local Child Welfare and Foster Care data
  - Local Juvenile Justice system data
  - Youth Disconnection Data from [Measure of America](#) (available at the state, metropolitan area, congressional district, and county levels)

# Getting Started Now

- ✓ Conduct outreach to organizations that may not be currently engaged in the youth homeless response system, such as those in the education, health, foster care and juvenile justice systems, to request any data on youth homelessness they may collect.
- ✓ Identify inequities and disparities experienced by youth experiencing homelessness across races, ethnicities, sexual orientation, and gender identity, both in experiences of homelessness and access to housing and services.
- ✓ Facilitate focus groups and listening sessions with youth with lived experience to identify inequities and disparities, resource needs, challenges and gaps they experienced within the local youth homelessness response system. Ensure diverse representation, voices, and intersectional experiences and identities.

# Statement of Need Panel Discussion



# Key Component #2: Community Partnerships



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# Why are Community Partnerships Important?

- ***The homeless response system cannot prevent and end youth homelessness alone***
- Effectively addressing youth homelessness will require coordination, collaboration and innovation from a wide range of cross-system stakeholders, including youth with lived experience, state child welfare agencies, school districts, workforce development organizations, the juvenile justice system, and organizations that represent the cultural and racial diversity of youth in your community
- Engaging partners in the community planning process early and often helps agencies and organizations see themselves in local efforts to prevent and end youth homelessness and become invested in the ongoing work

# Developing a Youth Action Board (YAB)

- Central to the success of a coordinated community planning process is the development of a strong YAB comprised of at least three (3) youth that have current or past lived experience of homelessness
- The YAB must be an authentic and equitable partner in every step of the community's youth homelessness response efforts, from planning to implementation of new projects to continuous quality improvement of the youth homeless response system
- Development of a YAB takes a significant amount of pre-work, including determining a budget that provides appropriate compensation for all YAB members and a multifaceted outreach strategy

# Getting Started Now

- ✓ Support development of your local YAB, including recruitment; planning for compensation, transportation, and childcare needs; and meaningful opportunities for leadership development.
- ✓ Identify champions from the CoC Board, state and local government, and public child welfare agencies to support your youth homelessness efforts and provide early leadership for the group alongside the YAB.
- ✓ Engage your local school districts and McKinney-Vento liaisons early in the process.

# Getting Started Now

- ✓ Develop messaging for conducting outreach to potential partner agencies and organizations, including national and local data on YYA homelessness.
- ✓ Outreach to organizations in your community that interact with or may interact with YYA who are at-risk of or experiencing homelessness, including intentional outreach to agencies that reflect the cultural and racial diversity of youth in your community.
- ✓ Work with the YAB and other YYA with lived experience to identify additional crucial partners for addressing youth homelessness.



# Community Partnerships Panel Discussion



# Key Component #3: Governance Structure



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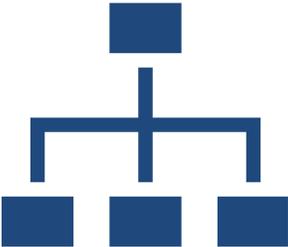
# Why is a Governance Structure Important?

- A governance structure specific to youth homelessness efforts can help your community address the ***system level challenges that individual organizations, coalitions, and agencies are otherwise unequipped to address on their own.***
- This decision-making structure and process should be respectful of the roles of different partners and the resources that they represent and transparent to both the partners and the public.
- It should also provide clarity as to the YAB's power and purpose, including:
  - Where does the YAB sit in local decision-making processes?
  - Who do they answer to, and who answers to them?
  - What are the boundaries and spheres of influence for the YAB's power?

# Getting Started Now

- ✓ Select a lead organization to coordinate planning and keep partners organized and focused on setting the vision and designing a cohesive system for youth.
- ✓ Begin developing a governance structure organizational chart, including defining clear roles and responsibilities with the CoC and YAB and how decisions will be made
- ✓ Design the local governance structure and decision-making process in partnership between YYA and older adult partners, with a focus on furthering equity and challenging norms of white dominant culture.
- ✓ See the following resources for more detailed information and guidance on getting started: [Building Your Youth Planning Team Webinar](#) and [The Magic at the Table: Building Your Youth Planning Team](#)

# Governance Structure Panel Discussion



# Key Component #4: Action Plan



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# Why is an Action Plan Important?

- *An action plan is a community's commitment to responding to the needs of YYA experiencing homelessness through a coordinated, collaborative approach*
- The action plan should respond directly to the needs and gaps identified throughout the coordinated community planning process and reflect authentic youth partnership and voice in all plan components
- It should be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect the community's progress towards the shared vision, goals, and objectives, as well as new barriers or challenges that may arise

# Getting Started Now

- ✓ Identify any existing community plans that may support or inform the development of an action plan to prevent and end youth homelessness.
- ✓ Look at examples of [coordinated community plans from YHDP communities](#) for ideas of how to develop a shared vision, goals, objectives, and action steps.



# Action Plan Panel Discussion



# Q&A Session



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# Past Webinar Information

- Youth Collaboration 102 – Held on December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
<https://www.hudexchange.info/trainings/courses/snaps-youthcollaboration-102-webinar/>
- Youth Collaboration 201 – Held on December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
<https://www.hudexchange.info/trainings/courses/snaps-youthcollaboration-201-webinar/>
- Building Your Youth Planning Team – Held on January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020  
<https://www.hudexchange.info/trainings/courses/snaps-building-your-youth-planning-team-webinar/>

# Additional Resources

- Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) resource page:  
<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/yhdp/>
- Resources for Homeless Youth Service Providers:  
<https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/resources-for-homeless-youth/resources-for-homeless-youth-service-providers/#planning-your-coordinated-community-approach>
- YHDP Community Resources:  
<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/yhdp/community-resources/#resources>

# Thank You!



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