

Youth Demonstration Listening Session #1

March 17, 2016

Session Transcript

Lonnie: Good afternoon. My name is Lonnie. I will be your conference operator today. At this time, I would like to turn the call over to your host Matt Aronson. Mr. Aronson, you may begin your conference.

Matt Aronson: That you so much, Lonnie. Thank you everybody for joining us today. We're really excited to have you all to participate in this listening session. Just so everybody is aware, we are excited to hear from you. This is in anticipation of a lot of the youth work that we're going to be doing this year. In particular, what we're really excited is the demonstration project, and this is our opportunity to hear from you. We will have another session next week, which will be generally the same. Folks are more than welcome to join for both calls, but the agenda will be the same—to hear from as many of you in the field as possible about some things we really should be thinking about and considering as we move forward with all of our youth projects.

Before we dive in we have our deputy assistant secretary here with us, Ann Oliva, and she's going to provide us with some context and some understanding of the demonstration and what we have in front of us.

Ann Oliva: Great. Thank you so much, Matt. Also thank you to all of you who are with us today. We are really excited, as Matt indicated, about the opportunity that has been presented to us by the appropriation that we were provided in the FY 2016 appropriation to the homeless assistance grants account, which are the account that generally funds the Continuum of Care program and the ESG program. This opportunity is both to build comprehensive systems of care for youth who are experiencing homelessness, but it's also an opportunity to evaluate what communities are doing within that demonstration and to provide technical assistance to those communities and communities around the country to do some research on youth homelessness that will help us meet the goals of Opening Doors, which is to end youth homelessness by 2020. I have a number of members of my team and the USICH team on the phone with us today, so we're all here listening and really want to hear from our communities to understand not just the barriers that you're experiencing but what you think need to be at the table as these kinds of systems are being planned, what questions you want to have answered as we go through an evaluation process or provide technical assistance.

All of these things are on the table. We're going to be doing two of these listening session via webinar, one today and one next week, but we've also already done some listening session with young people with lived experience in homelessness as well as a listening session that we did in person at the National Alliance to End Homelessness conference that was recently held in Oakland, California. This is really your opportunity to talk to us about what is happening in your communities, and how we can help your community, whether you are selected for a demonstration site in this round or not, but how we can help you get to build comprehensive systems of care for young people. We look forward to hearing your comments and questions. I assume this is going to

be a robust discussion, so let's go ahead and get started. I'm going to turn it back to Matt to lead us off.

Matt Aronson: Alright. Thank you so much, Ann. We really appreciate not only your leadership but joining the call today. It means a lot and we are all really committed across the federal agencies to make this work and to make this a process that is a collaborative process with you all in the field. Before we dive into the content, we do have some great questions that we want to lay out for you to get your feedback. I'm going to turn it over briefly to our technical assistance team, who are going to explain how this is going to work from a technical perspective. George, if you wouldn't mind.

George Martin: Thanks, Matt. Hi, everyone. My name is George Martin. I'm with TDA, one of HUD's technical assistance providers. I'm just going to walk through how we're going to be communicating with each other today. I want to start by reminding everybody to give your undivided attention to the discussion today. Turn off phones that aren't connected to this conference, and close your email and other programs. If you have technical issues, please, get in touch with me and my colleague Sandy Patel. You can do that by using the chat function. We're going to describe how that function works in just a minute. Some of you have already sent some chats asking why we were starting a few minutes late, so it seems as if some of you know how to use that. You can also send an email if needed to SPatel@tdainc.org. Now we're going to talk about how we're going to communicate today.

All of you are muted right now, but really, as Matt said, this is about you guys communicating. There are going to be two ways that you can do that, verbally via this conference call or in writing using the chat function in WebEx. To participate verbally, we're using an operator today, Lonnie, who started us off. She's going to govern how people are able to speak over the phone. What you're going to do, if you would like to make a comment over the phone, you're going to press *1, when you decide you want to say something. You're going to be added to a queue of people who are waiting to speak over the phone. When your turn comes up, Lonnie will introduce you to the entire conference call, and you'll be able to speak to everyone. If you decide, while you're waiting in the queue, that your comment or question was already addressed, then to remove yourself from the queue, you simply press *2 on your telephone keypad.

We will be repeating those instructions throughout the meeting today, so that you can remember how to do that. The other way that you can participate is via the chat function. To do this you're going to use, you should see a little chat box on the right-hand side of your screen. If you look at the slide that I've brought up right now, your screen should look something like that picture that I have on the left side of the slide, and we can see the chat function is outlined in red, but it's possible that maybe you don't see it and you just see participants. If that's the case, look at the picture on the right-hand side of this slide.

You should see a little icon that's grayed out at the top right-hand side of your screen that say "chat." You just click on that, and then you should see the chat function on the right-hand side. The chat function is really one of the only things that we're going to be using on that right-hand side of the screen, and so if you want to make it larger, all you have to do is either minimize or close that window. You see the arrows here on the slide showing that you can exit out of the participant panel or click on the little triangle to minimize it. That'll make your chat window a lot bigger. The other

thing you can do is, if you hover your mouse right next to that where that right-hand menu widens into the rest of the screen. It'll give you the option to drag to the left and expand the chat function.

Then, it is pretty simple to send a chat. All you need to do is type in the fields your question or your comment, ensure that it's being sent to all participants and then click, send, or press enter, and we'll all be able to see your comments. Another thing, and we'll pull this up again at the end of the session, but we're hoping to have a really robust conversation today, and it's possible that we might not get to everybody's questions or comments, so please, remember this email address, YouthDemo@HUD.gov, and if you have any thoughts or questions that you didn't get to tell everyone today, you can send them there. On that note, I think I'm going to turn it back over to Matt, so we can get started.

Matt Aronson: Great. Thank you very much, George. You guys have been extremely helpful, and thank you everybody for your patience. This is a virtual listening session with, by the end of the call, maybe upwards of 250 or more folks, so I know this is challenging. If you do have something to share with us, please, try to get on the phone. That won't, obviously, be possible for most folks, so please also, use the chat function. We think this'll be really helpful. We are going to upload all of your comments including a transcribed version of the verbal comments onto the website, so everybody's going to have an opportunity to see this.

Even if you send us comments through that email address, we will make sure that those are included, not only because we want to be transparent, but we want everybody to have the same opportunity to see your great ideas, and we will be using these. So thank you all for being on the phone and for your patience. Without further ado, we have a set of questions that were largely foreshadowed in the email, if you guys saw the invite, to register for this event. We're going to get through as many as we can. I think what we agreed to as the rules today with our internal team, even if it's a great conversation, we're going to cut you off somewhere between 20 and 30 minutes for a conversation, just so we can move to the next question.

That means, at a minimum, we should get through about three questions. If we go on follow-up questions and others, maybe we'll follow those leads. Maybe we'll get to a few other questions, but don't worry, plenty of opportunity to have conversations about these. We are looking for you guys to weigh in as best as you can with all of your information. There is no silly response. There is no silly answer. If you have clarifying questions, please, type them in, or if you really feel like you need to ask them because they're pertinent to your understanding or how you can provide feedback, please, let us know, but in general, we're just looking to absorb as much as we can from your experience. Here's the first question. **What does a collaborative community approach look like? What we're looking for is who are the essential partners, and what do those relationships look like? Who absolutely needs to be at the table, and how should their interaction look like to put together a coordinated community response to preventing and ending youth homelessness?**

George Martin: Matt, I think while we give everyone a minute to think about that question, we'll just remind them. Lonnie, can you remind everyone of the steps on how to indicate that you'd like to speak on the call, and then we'll see if anybody's ready.

Lonnie: At this time if you would like to speak or ask a question, that is * and the number 1 on your telephone keypad. You will hear a tone acknowledging your request and a prompt to record your name. We'll pause for a moment to compile the Q&A roster.

Matt Aronson: Not only will I restate the question here and continue to do that verbally for everyone, if you see on your screen on the left-hand side, we're going to be posting every question, so whether it's a question that we had predesigned or if we have follow-up questions, you'll have an opportunity to just quickly look to your left to see where we are and what we're trying to listen for. Again, what does the coordinated community response to ending youth homelessness look like, and in particular, what are those relationships that need to happen? Who are the partners, and what do they look like? What does the interaction look like between those partners and the effort, either with the CoC or schools or with public child-welfare agencies? It could be with systems of justice or law enforcement. Who are those folks who need to be at the table, and what should those relationships look like? If you have experience in this, please, let us know what has worked well and what hasn't worked well. Or if you have thoughts about what you would like to see in your community as far as the development of those relationships in order to really put together a comprehensive community approach.

We're already getting some great comments online.

Lonnie: We have a question from the phone line. Proceed with your question or comment.

Jared Felt: Yeah. I was just going to say that there are entities and efforts that do exist that are collaborative and collective. The one, with which I'm familiar, is Youth Link and the Youth Opportunity Center in Minneapolis. It involves over 30 community partners who have formal and informal memorandums of understanding and partnerships working together at the same site in the same meetings. It reduces complexity of navigating the services for youth, and it brings together all of the partners that need to be at the table including government entities, local, state, city, healthcare, basic-needs services at the drop-in center, outreach, education, employment, and creating trusting adult relationships, and of course mental health. That's my comment. Thank you.

Matt Aronson: Thank you, Jared.

Lonnie: As a reminder, that is * and the number 1. At this time there are no further questions or comments.

Matt Aronson: Alright, well, we definitely have some good thoughts. In the chat room we have some nods to WIOA boards, which are really important, so if folks have thoughts about how they have been connected to those types of partners, that would be really interesting for us to hear, how they think we should be connecting folks to those kinds of partners. We have some good lists as far as folks engaging with schools and housing providers, law enforcement, congregations. I'm assuming that means religious congregations but may other types of congregations. I know the conversation is going really well online, which I really appreciate. We'll give a couple more minutes, maybe a minute or more two. If anybody wants to call pressing, I believe it was *, 1. We'd love to hear your comments.

Lonnie: We have a question from the line of Penny Cohert.

Penny Cohert: I had just a comment, two things. Having worked with children aging out of foster care and now working for a coalition that deals with homelessness, two questions I think you should ask when a child is about to age out of foster care: is the goal with or without involving the parents? Is there any hope there? There's a big push in Louisiana for children to remain with their parents if at all possible. The second question I think you need to ask, is therapy available, whether it's for mental health therapy, substance abuse therapy, RAD therapy, whatever is available. The sooner you can get them some therapy in place, it helps them to navigate those waters of being out on their own without much support or any from their family.

Matt Aronson: What are some of the organizations or the actual staff positions, the folks, that you have found most helpful in engaging with those programs and in supporting young people in the system with those types of services?

Penny Cohert: Well, therein lies the problem. One of the things that's happened in our state is they've cut all of the youth programs for children aging out of foster care, but now the coalitions through the federal government, through HUD, has come back with a big push to open up programs for youth specifically aging out of foster care to help them get on their feet and get started, but if there isn't access to that particular one, there are many therapists who are willing to work with kids aging out of foster care, and you just need to compile that list of who is willing to help you or who accepts Medicaid with these kids, and then of course with Obamacare, I'm assuming that they all are going to have access to healthcare.

Then the second thing is, is working with DCFS from the beginning before they age out. They're the frontline workers. I have many friends, who are DCFS workers. I know how hard they work and what duress they're under to try and help all of the kids who suffer from abuse, but one of their problems is the youth aging out, they no longer are able to provide services that were in place because they've aged out of the system. So we need to get in touch with the kids and have a plan, a goal, before they actually turn 18. Well, it's 18 for Louisiana--I know it's different in other states--before they turn 18, and then they don't have access to those services anymore.

Matt Aronson: Thank you so much. Still opening up time for comments on who are those right stakeholders. We've heard about healthcare. We've actually heard about some systems. The Link is one of them that does a really good job of bringing some of those stakeholders together. We've heard a lot in the chat room about who some of those partners are. Any more comments on the phone? Who absolutely needs to be at the table, and what do those relationships need to look like for this to even work, a coordinated response to end youth homelessness?

Lonnie: Our next comment comes from the line of Angela Dorazio.

Angela Dorazio: Yes. I would just share that, in some of our community planning, we've been talking a lot about the coordinated engagement approach of young people really needs to be as extensive and comprehensive as possible to meet young people where they are physically in the community, whether that means they're showing up at job-training, job-readiness sites, schools, libraries—really beefing up our street outreach presence and relying on some of our RHY providers to help us reach young people who are experiencing housing crisis, certainly any of our LGBT-youth providers that are engaging with young people who are experiencing housing crises. Really

using any kind of vehicle we can to reach young people where they are, and using those providers who aren't necessarily housing providers or even homeless-service providers but are engaging with these young people. And really encouraging these providers to agree to a common assessment form that will allow us to not only gather information on who these young people are, but will assess their needs appropriately and connect them to services.

Matt Aronson: Great. Thank you.

Lonnie: Our next question comes from the line of Megan Blonden.

Megan Blonden: I wanted to speak to the piece around essential partners and what do those relationships look like. I think many people have mentioned that it's important to involve the systems that sort of touch youth homelessness including child welfare, justice, education, et cetera, but I would add to that what those relationships look like that there needs to be a certain level of buy in from the leadership from whomever those essential partners are in order for this to work effectively. The other thing that I would add concerns having somebody to do the heavy lift, to do the sort of backbone support and the importance of that. Whoever is going to lead the collaborative effort comes from an objective place or at least the perception of an objective place, so that you are building trust across all of the partners and the entities as you are moving your collaborative approach forward.

Matt Aronson: Thanks so much for that, Megan. Yeah. We've seen that as we've had different pilots in the past, that those sites who have been most successful early on are not only when you have that broad array of partnerships, but when the leading organizations or set of groups has the capacity to lead, and when they're able to very quickly build bridges. We've definitely seen in the past where there's some internal or local dynamics that make it difficult for folks to come to the table simply because certain old relationships relative to who's currently involved. That's really important. Thank you.

Lonnie: The next comment comes from the line of Christy Sexton. Christy, your line is open.

Christy Sexton: I am working specifically in the San Francisco Bay area. One of our essential partners for our former foster youth is working with the housing authority. We would not be able to provide the level of subsidy and support to our young people if it were not for a very specific collaboration that the City of Oakland helped put together. It involves a variety of different providers. That has a full continuum of working with 18 all the way up to seniors in our community, but our part is working with the housing authority.

They help us to be able to navigate landlord issues, finding affordable, safe housing in the community, and then providing a temporary subsidy while then being able to help our young people gain the skills and what not to become self sufficient, and then working with the housing authority to look at what is a step-down program? We're fortunate that our housing authority is Move to Work, which I know they are few and far between in the country, but if you have that ability to work with an MTW housing authority, there is a little bit more room for flexibility, but with all of the players at that table from the government funder to the other providers to housing authority it has become a collaborative that has been able to get hundreds of people off of the street into permanent housing. And for us a key essential player are the housing authorities within the

community and the city governments that can help broker those relationships. Thank you.

Matt Aronson: Terrific. Thanks. Alright. If that's all I'm hearing from comments on the first question, so we're going to move on to the second question. It is related. It's talking about barriers. **What are the barriers that exist to establishing those relationships? What are barriers, for example, in CoCs engaging with youth providers, in youth providers engaging folks in the healthcare world or building bridges with law enforcement and justice, legal, et cetera.** What are some of the barriers from whatever your perspective is on the phone? I know we have stakeholders from the CoC, we have stakeholders from schools, specifically from youth projects, whether funded by privately, by the CoC, or via the Runaway Homeless Youth Act.

We have a number of other different stakeholders on the phone, so from your stakeholders' perspective, what are some of the barriers because this is where we can help you? What are some of the things that we can do, HUD or more broadly speaking as the federal government, to lowering those barriers? This could be rules, letters that we could send, simply support or building things into our programs (for example, the demo program) to help you more well establish those relationships and to help you more well leverage those resources with your partners. What are the barriers that exist and what we might be able to do to lower those barriers, so you can build those relationships more effectively?

Lonnie: As a reminder, that is * and the number 1 on your telephone keypads. We have a comment from the line of Lori Freedman.

Matt Aronson: Great. Thank you.

Lori Freedman: I just had two comments. I think one of the barriers, at least that we experience here in New Jersey in the urban areas for young people to get benefits. Young people, we provide supportive housing for youth, and it's very hard for them to get food stamps and welfare and Medicaid, even though it shouldn't be hard for them to get Medicaid. It's very hard for them to get through that process, and they could be in our program for six months or longer, and still have not gotten food stamps or cash assistance, and while that's not the end goal for them, for some of them who have nothing when they come in and aren't going to get a job right away, that's a real barrier to moving on.

I guess the only other comment I would make is that if we look at youth housing and are targeting those 18 to 24 year olds, when we're thinking about permanent housing, kind of what happens when they become 24? Because, if they continue to stay with us, then we're really taking youth housing off of the market because the longer that they stay, then we don't have that opportunity for other youth to come in. I think a real barrier is: what to do as the youth become older and really aren't considered youth anymore? Where do they go if they haven't gotten to the point yet where they could live independently without additional housing assistance?

Matt Aronson: That's great. That last point I know we've been thinking about a lot lately. There was a summit recently where a few people spoke this issue. It's somewhat related to the step-down comment previously, or how do you move on to some other type of housing for the reasons that you brought up. Thank you for that. That was great.

Lonnie: We have a question from the line of Jerry Tracey.

Jerry Tracey: Yes, hi. I'm following up on a piece that's been discussed in the chat section at some length, but not really verbally, so I just thought I would chime in there. Having worked with the RHY program and the housing programs and the CoC in areas such as D.C. and Virginia, I find that that real disconnect is something that maybe demonstration grants have the opportunity to address. The CoCs have typically been responsible for the adult housing and family housing. Then RHY programs and other programs are responsible for the youth housing, and they really haven't typically come to the same table. If you're looking for something that demonstration grants can do that's innovative it would be to bring those folks to the same table for a discussion about how they could share responsibilities in those areas.

Matt Aronson: That's terrific. Do you have any specific examples of when it's been most challenging, or is it merely just that the lack of experience as you described that some CoCs, I know there are some high performing CoCs out there that have great relationships with young people.

Jerry Tracey: Yeah. My choice has been that it's more a matter of the players in one group just not really being connected or knowing about the players in another group. In some places that does work, and they are connected as you say, but in some places they've been operating in silos, so I think that the barrier is just that. The barrier, which you could break down, is to help breakdown that silo by perhaps a demonstration grant providing an opportunity and motivating and actually support bringing those people all to that same table. I don't think it's necessarily an unwillingness, but I think it's the same siloed kind of thinking that we all get into. So I think it's more of a matter of saying what could we do to motivate those folks to sit down at the same table. I'm not sure if that's what you're asking or not, but that's my thought.

Matt Aronson: I think that was 100 percent of what I was asking. That was great. I am often reminded as I have had feet in both worlds that the development of those systems happened at very different times and spaces of different populations, and so yeah, I think what I'm hearing is making sure we provide the space for folks to be able to work on this, for folks to be able to sit in the same room and do some cross education about their histories and their worlds together, and why it's important for everybody to be thinking about this.

Jerry Tracey: Yeah. I think that becomes a motivating factor to at least reducing that barrier. I think the other piece is to look at the legislation because there is a question about HUD's role in this. I think there is a question of where the legislation makes it harder for that collaboration to occur, what are the tripping points, and maybe finding that out from as you said, some CoCs are doing that well, and maybe finding that out from the ones who are doing it well how they've gotten past that barrier.

Just referring back to one of the prior conversations, there was a comment made about the fact that the coordinating body has to be trusted. In the research that was done on runaway and homeless youth in rural areas, that was one of the things identified: if you're going to get people together, they have to come together under an umbrella where they feel like there's not one agenda being carried out. They have to trust that the coordinating body is looking at everybody's purpose. It may be one of the barriers is sort of a mistrust about whether people are focused on their own agendas.

Matt Aronson: Terrific. Thank you so much.

Lonnie: Your next comment comes from the line of Eric Johnson.

Eric Johnson: This is Eric, with the Oakland Housing Authority. My points are twofold. One is, I really think it would be advantageous for you to look into some of the innovative programs that the Move to Work housing authorities are already doing because they're operating outside of the traditional models. The traditional HUD models, as we know, have issues, and I think they have particularly issues for this population. I think when you engage with HUD and when you want to change that, you're going to have to break the box of what they think is a housing-assistance program in different ways.

I think there are models out there, not just the one that was mentioned earlier but another one, on which we're working, but I know there are other housing authorities that are MTW doing great work, so I wanted to throw that out that maybe you contact our office and Don McBloom and see if you can corral some of them to get some input on the barriers. The last comment I have is in terms of really what can you do to support the development of relationships. It's hard to support that, but one of the things that I think that we find most challenging are the restrictions we have in sharing our data and matching data with other government agencies. I understand not sharing it with the community.

Matt Aronson: With the public housing authorities.

Eric Johnson: Yes, and we have overcome those related to education, but we have not overcome them related to health and some other outcomes, and if the federal government could look at the intent of that. You have government agencies that have joint requirements toward confidentiality. The question is, why can't we, in a very restricted way, share that data, use that data, have healthier outcomes for our youth and for adults. I think that really does need to be tackled if you want to break down the federal silos that bring the money down into our communities and into silos where everybody is operating in their own silo and not talking to the other program. We're just very intent on trying to find ways to break down Education, Health and Human Service, Department of Labor, and HUD. That's it.

Matt Aronson: Terrific. Thanks so much. That was great.

Lonnie: Your next comment comes from the line of Kathleen Wright.

Kathleen Wright: Hello everybody. I'm calling from Springfield, Illinois. When our CoC got funded we were lucky. We were the first youth program to get funding. We were the first program to get funding in our continuum, so for 10 years the Service Bureau has been part of our CoC. I consider us very fortunate that we didn't have to break down those doors. We also are RHY, and we get Illinois Department of Human Services funding. I would say our biggest barrier that we have with our youth is when we're trying to get DCFS kids out of the system to come into our programs.

The judges look at us as a not viable alternative. They look at us as well, I'm not really seeing this used out of our DCFS system for them to go into a homeless youth system, so that's a huge barrier for us because we have kids who are 18, 19, 20 trying to come out of DCFS's Child Welfare system

and want to work in our system, but they won't release them, and because we don't have DCFS contracts we cannot work with those youths. That's a huge problem and has been here for many years. We've even gone to court with some of these kids and tried to get the judges to release them not necessarily to us but to themselves, but here they just feel like that's releasing them into a homeless situation, and they won't do it. Then the second barrier we have is that we have a lot of problems getting birth certificates for these young folks, and it takes sometimes months especially when we're going across states. I've always wondered if there's something that can be done about that for a homeless youth if there's a way to expedite that. Those are my comments.

Matt Aronson: In your attempts--and I'm sorry they haven't been more successful--to build relationships with judges, have you tried anything specific? Have you done strategic-planning sessions, things that have worked and haven't worked and how we might support you to do that better?

Kathleen Wright: Well, we have been accepted into the juvenile justice committees now that are meeting, and so some of the DCFS kids that come through that system, there are judges at these meetings. They're starting to talk to us more. I've had personal conversations with these judges. I mean I've been here forever, and I don't know if it's something that their hands are tied that they can't do it or won't do it. I don't really have an answer for that. No, we have not sat down with just like a whole a group of our judges here and done anything like that. Are other people, do they have these problems?

Matt Aronson: Well, and why don't we, if folks want to jump in on that or if there's another comment queued up, we can get to that. Thank you. Bringing in the Department of Justice is something we've thankfully been doing from the start, but we're going to make sure that your comments on that are kind of represented in what we're thinking about both for selection criteria and what these things should look like. Why don't we take one or two more comments on this question in particular? If you have a follow up, if you have a positive story of engagement with either law enforcement or justice, and then we'll move on to our next question.

Lonnie: Okay. Your next comment comes from the line of Dale Zukowski.

Dale Zukowski: This is Dale from Buffalo, New York.

Matt Aronson: Hi, Dale.

Dale Zukowski: Some of the barriers that we are anticipating are the things that HUD really doesn't want to fund anymore. We're seeing it indeed for a drop-in center. That seems to be one of the best practices nationwide, but that would be like a supportive-services-only project. There'll be a place to engage people, but it will be also a place to link them to housing. Probably we would need new transitional housing. That's another thing that HUD explicitly said they don't want to fund anymore is new transitional housing. It's just give us the flexibility to fund things that work. We've already partnered with the University of Buffalo on doing some research on this population that those results being released shortly. But there needs to be a clear definition of a population too. Where the line that you draw between homeless and somebody who may need assistance, but not necessarily homeless, but those are some of the barriers that we're seeing and trying to figure out.

Matt Aronson: Thanks, Dale. That's a good segue. We were talking specifically about relationships and barriers to building relationships. Dale is leading us into our next questions, which are the barriers, regulatory barriers or otherwise, but specifically what you think we can do that keep you from implementing the interventions that you would want to implement. So what are some of the barriers, whether it's timeliness barriers or different ways of receiving and distributing monies or different ways of collaborating. We've heard a little bit from the Alameda County folks about how that might work with data-sharing regulatory requirements.

On the intervention side we were talking about relationships and at the systems-level side. **What are the types of regulatory barriers that you think we might address going forward either through a pilot or different regulations that might allow you to run some of the programs you would hope for?** I will say, as far as definitions and documentations stuff, we've already said a lot of about documentation, so please, go online. If you guys are still having documentation problems, please, let us know because youth are not required to show these extra barriers of documentation. I'm nervous out in the field that people are still holding young people to a higher standard than we do at HUD.

So certainly with that and the definition stuff, which we hear a lot about, and we talk about that at the federal level. Aside from those kind of known entities, what are the regulatory things, about which we're not thinking? What are the regulatory things that would be really important but are thing that aren't talked about all that often that would make a big impact in allowing you to implement the interventions better and more well serve your young people locally?

Lonnie: As a reminder, that is * and the number 1 in order to participate. Your first question comes from the line of Kathy Tillotson.

Kathy Tillotson: My name is Kathy Tillotson with Build Futures. We take homeless youth off of the street using emergency rapid rehousing. Our Continuum of Care does not have any funding. The only youth funding is a small amount to ex-foster youth. These are a tiny percentage in our county because of the cost of living, we're in Orange County, housing is a serious problem, but we have found a model that works because we believe they should get off of the street immediately and get in sober livings and shared housing.

We basically pay for a bed and take them off right away and use WIOA funding to help get them jobs, but the problem is again the ID. They are not allowed to get into a WIOA program without an ID and Social Security card. That can take weeks to get, so that's a big problem. The other problem is coming out of jail, they don't have their IDs and Social Security card. Again, that takes a long time to get, so if we could just get over those barriers. For example, they could take job readiness classes with WIOA before they get the ID, so that when they get an id, they'd be ready to go to work. So those are some big barriers that would be wonderful to get taken care of.

Matt Aronson: Yeah. Those are really interesting ideas. It sounds to me somewhat like what we have under McKinney-Vento for education, they say presumption of when you're going in, so, immediate enrollment or immediate access to certain types of programming, and then an allowance over the course of however many days or in a school year in the school context to be able to then get those documents in the backend. Really interesting. Thanks.

Lonnie: Your next comment is from John Bradley.

John Bradley: I'm calling from Maine. I've been writing all kinds of notes, but I want to especially talk about rural homelessness at least as we experience it. One is there just isn't funding that reaches small communities where there are lots of kids who are unstably housed. That includes a whole range of things. We get back to the definition because, if there's no shelters, there are going to be more likely to be couch surfing and doing other things. Barriers in that aside from just the resources and ways to provide services where all of the shelters and all of the outreaches are miles and miles away. The whole issue of age is real challenging for us because everything is different in terms of our shelter, the 18 to 24. It just would be great if there was some consistency in what we really want to do and what's the right approach to youth. I just want to reiterate that.

Certainly the other thing that I guess I feel really strongly about having done some work on counting around the state is the whole McKinney-Vento school homeless. It doesn't work in most places because the liaisons don't have the time or they vary so greatly. Some of that is clearly a state issue, but I think it starts with the federal government, goes to the state, how liaisons are trained, how they're monitored, so that one has a sense that they're actually doing something to really meet the needs of homeless youth or identifying them. I'm not sure, but we certainly found when we did surveys around the state that they varied. There would be two communities next to each other, one bigger than the other.

The small one would have lots of kids whom they identify as homeless and the other one would not. There a lot of federal disincentives and state disincentives to finding youth who have difficulty or who may need transportation, so I think that's an issue that, in any big approach, is trying to be novel and trying to do something new, needs to kind of look at what are the barriers that school districts feel in identifying homeless youth and wanting to refer them. I think there are some barriers, concerns about money, that shouldn't be there, but they are there in poor districts. I think that's the biggest thing I would say. I know for us there are a lot of state issues.

As a rural state, you'd think we'd want to do a lot of host homes and really creative responses for these kids in rural areas, but there are a lot of barriers in our state that require much more training around foster-care placement. They don't have an alternative that doesn't include a much more rigorous and training than we can really ask of host homes in crises situations if we're trying to develop that. So efforts here have always failed, even though that might be an obvious model. I think helping kind of ensure a way that really supports that model would be great especially for rural areas and to look at, what are the barriers within each state and maybe getting some help.

One last, I just want to mention that we have a pretty good legal-service option, and I'll tell you, we found this out from the lawyer. If you can have a lawyer get involved with trying to get an ID, it can really speed things up as opposed to a social worker, sad as that is. It really helps to have someone who is an attorney representing saying I need this now as an attorney. We've seen that make a big difference in getting IDs more quickly.

Matt Aronson: John, before you go just to be clear, the age challenge, about which you were talking, that was specifically, essentially a minors versus older...

John Bradley: Yeah. Well, all of our young, the youth funding here, you know, our Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, we have a state one, it goes up to 21.

HUD is always talking 18 to 24, but that's not where the youth are in youth programs. By 21 or 22, they have to go to adult shelters. Is that really what we want? Probably not, but the funding won't let us do youth shelters that go to 24. Obviously, even that's been a reach for us to use basic centers to go up to 20 or 21, and that's because we finagled, and it seems to work, but most of the basic centers, by law, are 17 and under, so you now have a variety of age possibilities. If you're asking us to create a good Continuum, I think you'd want to at least have some clarity about, what's a youth, and have an assessment based on who that youth is, whether they're 19, 17, or 22 because we all know that it's all changing. The older youth, whom we're seeing, that's when they may get motivated, and they're not different.

They've been developmentally really delayed, so making those differences can be really artificial, and it does make it harder to count them, harder to know what services they can get. You know that we have youth here that can maintain their main care through 20. Then they lose it, and unless they meet other criteria because we haven't expanded, it's a whole new ballgame. If there are ways to get consistency, especially if you're trying to do new models to really give us the tools to make a consistent continuum. We've been involved with the continuum since it's started. I'm a co-chair, so I can't avoid being part of the continuum.

The other big barrier is that youth programs are such a small minority, and youth are a minority. There are many more than people seem to acknowledge because I don't think our counts really do a good job, and the pathways of youth are really different and the counts and a lot of our assessment tools don't really work as well with the youth as we think or want them to. It's really important for youth providers to band together, to be a part of the continuum, or a subcommittee. We have a separate group, so we meet regularly, and we give the feedback as a group. It's the only thing that gives us even some power in the equation--and also to make sure that we're, all together, identifying the issues that affect youth in our two continuums. It's essential that we meet and that we create our own sense of what's important and what are priorities to us.

Matt Aronson: Great. Thanks. I will say, especially on the rural stuff, please, leave some more comments. I know not everybody can tell us everything that they want to tell us, but specifically, John, and other folks who are working with rural, we will be awarding to at least four (we're hoping anyways, it's in our appropriations language) rural sites, so that's a priority for us. Please, leave some comments, so we can learn more about how to do that well. Thankfully, the new ESSA, the Every Student Succeeds Act does have some accountability provisions, about which we're really excited. The rubber will meet the road when it's implemented, and we're hoping that that works well but where they've tried to begin to address the capacity issue, making sure.

There are going to be requirements that the state coordinator and the local liaison have the capacity to do their jobs. There will hopefully monitoring to that fact, et cetera. Going forward, we'll be afforded the capacity locally to be able to make sure that those services are actually being realized. A few more comments on the regulatory barriers, kind of the things that you think we're not thinking of. I promise you that there some of them about which we are thinking a lot about. But what are preventing from your dream project or for you really serving your young people the way

that you think you'd like to be serving them, implementing the projects that you'd like to implement? What are some of those, and how might we begin to address them?

Lonnie: Next we have Ken Marx.

Ken Marx: Yes. one of my concerns is that in the focus of the LGBT population and the human-trafficking portion of youth, it seems to be not a lot of information that's been shared. What I'm trying to do is just find out a little bit more, with the demonstration hopefully, that we can begin to mesh some of those resource people as well as some of the educational people to bring this together and give us a better understanding of how we can best house youth. Not just in the urban areas, but in the rural communities there seems to be a real disconnect as well, so it is hopeful that we would be able, with this demonstration project, to provide some services in those areas as it relates to housing.

Matt Aronson: Great. Thanks. Are there some specific barriers that you've seen from a regulatory perspective? What are some of the things or how would you like to see us either message or being to address rules or think about waivers in a way that you think would help you guys address the specific issues?

Lonnie: Your next comment comes from the line of Dianne Myers.

Diane Meyers: Thanks for taking the call. I'm concerned that a lot of the youth either are already living in kinship or especially with their grandparents or that is a really good potential resource, but there are barriers about that, for example various state and federal rules prohibit them living in senior housing with their grandparents, so I'd really like to see some innovative things around waiving of some of those regulations and/or looking at some alternatives for supporting those kinds of nontraditional households, which are becoming actually more and more traditional. I know that, under certain programs, they can get funding for housing, but I think they need much more support than just the funding. I think they need how to work with the youth and how to have these intergenerational models really work, so I'd love to see some innovative things come out of the demonstration.

Matt Aronson: That's terrific. The more traditional family unification and family engagement models, education, I think, was ahead the curve as they've thought about community engagement and the broader sense of what that means to reengage in your community. It makes a lot of sense for us to think a little bit more about how do we facilitate that as being in home isn't necessarily the immediate family, but maybe others in the community, and is often a much better placement than an out-of-placement care for a lot of young people. I think that's a terrific thing to think about. Thank you.

Lonnie: Next we have Angela Hogan.

Angela Hogan: I'm calling from Southwest Florida and as a CoC director, I might have a little bit different perspective. I think the biggest barrier for my continuum is just a competing priority, in that we're looking at some hard deadlines in 2016 for veterans and 2017 for chronic homeless and 2020 for youth and families. We have very limited resources within our small community, and they're trying to juggle pots. When HUD is putting so much pressure on making

sure that we're reaching the goals in 2016 and 2017, it becomes very hard to reprioritize. I think that the demonstration project is a fantastic idea. I know that, for our continuum, we've always taken youth and children as one of our areas of what we've always felt responsible for, but we've always to fund it through private sources. We're hopeful that, as it gets closer, that will become more of a priority in funding through HUD. I was also really glad to hear someone mention human trafficking. I think that has to be a player at the table.

Matt Aronson: Thanks. That's great. For my CoC folks on the phone in particular those who are lead agencies, we hear that. We do ask a lot of you guys, and if there are folks on the phone who don't know that we ask a lot of Continuum of Care leads, they just need to look at your Continuum of Care program application. This is actually a good segue into technical assistance and all of the different supports that you guys think you need to make all of this stuff happen. One of those areas is, how do continuums of care incorporate a youth orientation into their goals, their activities to preventing and ending homelessness overall.

We don't want you to give up preventing and ending homelessness as long as that is a job that still needs to be done for all of the other groups, but we very much want to support you in fully incorporating an end to youth homelessness through all of your communities, all of the different technologies and methodologies and interventions within your community. So that is one area of technical assistance, to which we are committed to do, to make sure that you guys can do that appropriately and not go crazy. The follow-up question to that is, this process is, as Deputy Secretary Oliva alluded to, a pretty significant process.

We are asking you guys to create a community-wide coordinate plan to end youth homelessness in your community while you're doing all of the other stuff. What that means is that communities are going to have to know and be able to implement needs assessments specifically for youth at a system level as well as at the program level. They're going to need to put together a planning process, and we know from experience: both experiences in demonstrations that our colleagues at HHS have run, our most recent pilot project, and our LGBTQ prevention project in Houston and Cincinnati, that this is a very significant list.

Then you have the implementation phase where you're actually implementing those projects, making sure they're matching with fidelity to best practices or promising strategies, and finally an evaluation, so this is a fairly significant endeavor we're asking you guys to go on, and we're hopefully are going to be able to support you in every way you need, but we want to know a little bit more for each of those steps. **What are the supports that you think your community is going to need to get through those processes? What are the supports that you're going to need during the needs assessment and planning, during the implementation and evaluation phase?** If you could help us prioritize, what are the most important technical assistance and other support needs, meaning it might not just be a consultant to work with you, it could be a letter that comes from HUD, whether it's a dear colleague style of letter or a frequently asked questions.

What are those supports that are going to help you, assuming we've already addressed many of the regulatory barriers that we've talked about before, have addressed some of the relationship barriers? What are those supports that you want us to have lined up, so that we will have that brief ready, that document, that technical assistance provider, the consultant to go to your community, or maybe the

joint letter from the federal government? What are those supports that you'll need to be successful in putting together a coordinated community approach?

Lonnie: As a reminder, that is * and the number 1 on your telephone keypads. We have a comment from the line of Annett Beebe.

Annett Beebe: We are just starting to look at this and put together, through our networking committee, a room full of stakeholders for this population. Some of the things that I'm hearing, through these phone calls-- I'm really thankful that I live in Knoxville because we seem to be really organized over here. Some of the areas into which I've looked just to capture some of the numbers that we need just to begin the assessment, I have gone through our hotline--we have a community hotline here for our youth--I've also gone into HMIS, and I haven't heard HMIS through any of the responses so far.

And I'm not sure if anybody who is receiving HUD money isn't using HMIS, or anybody who doesn't even know what HMIS is, which is the Homeless Management Information System, for anybody who is receiving HUD funding here in Knoxville, we have to use that system to put in our homeless population that we're working with, and that's a great source to find numbers. Looking through for education, it's the National Center for Homeless Education. I've gotten some numbers through them where every school in every county has to do this report for their state. Rapid rehousing funding also is something that we use a lot here. I'm hoping to tap into that as finding resources for housing for some of our youth. We also have a program. It's THDA, Tennessee Housing Department Agency.

I'm not sure how other states work, but that's also another funding source that we're hoping to tap into to help us establish some type of housing for youth. I'm really naïve just because I'm just starting this and because I'm like I haven't run across any of those problems yet. I don't know if I'm asking questions or trying to help people find some numbers or find some resources. Our continuum of care, I think, is run pretty well. I'm finding that working with our youth population, though, I would really like to see our continuum of care have a separate unit for youth because they have special needs that you can't just clump together with other homeless projects that we have going on in our community for adults. So I don't know who out there is doing that or what the feasibility is of that.

Matt Aronson: In the work that you guys have done, what have been some of the supports that have been essential for you guys to be able to do the amazing work that you've already been doing?

Annett Beebe: Well, we have a homeless coalition, through which we work, and our homeless coalition now has taken on, for this year, is our homeless youth population. For a long time, it was working with the chronic, then it was working with the seniors. Not that any of that, really, has come to an end. It hasn't but we do have services in place, quickly becoming inadequate when we're talking about our seniors, but we're looking at youth now. We have a good homeless coalition. Part of the networking committee, I'm co-chairing this year, our intent is to work on this issue. Here in Knoxville, everybody is hungry.

I've been working with homeless youth for a very short period of time, and I've been just connecting with the Department of Children's Services and with other entities. So I just made a few phone calls.

We have our school systems involved. We have our police departments involved. We have some of our social service agencies, which deal with children, such as Youth Villages, DCS. All I do is put the word out, and they're hungry for this. They want a community coordinated response, so that we are looking at it in a holistic way. We have a Workforce Connection here. We have them involved. We have our career center involved. We have some of our trade schools and our community colleges involved. The word just went out just a little bit, and everybody's like oh yeah, I want in. So I think that we're very fortunate to have that. Looking for numbers, is anybody else using HMIS out there?

Matt Aronson: Please, continue the conversation with us. I kind of want to ask you a thousand questions, but I want to let a few other people jump in too, but thank you for sharing your experience.

Please, continue to write in both from our last caller and everybody else. We do have about 15 more minutes, so please, if we are providing technical assistance and support, where do you need it the most. You can tell us about all of the different inputs you need from strategic planning, needs assessment, all the way through interventions. What are the most important supports that you think HUD can provide either directly through notes, frequently asked questions, briefs, things such as that, or through the provision of technical assistance providers to your local communities to support you in engagement and things like that?

Lonnie: Your next comment comes from the line of Amanda Wood.

Amanda Woods: This is Mandy from Nashville. I've got several of our amazing youth service providers here in the room with me, and I just wanted to address the last callers about HMIS and tie it into your question about what HUD can do, what the federal partners can do to assist local continuums. One thing that I've noticed is that every continuum seems to be at a different level of maturity in terms of how they come at these different issues. Often times we talk about data, we pay lip service to data, but I think that HUD, to make a bold state that data has to serve as one of the drivers in this process because HMIS is supposed to be continuum wide.

Often times I have to deep dive for information, and often I find really incredible results that can change the way that we have this conversation. I know as an HMIS admin that anytime that HUD or the federal partners can come together and make a solid statement around, we know one thing to be true, and that's that data has drive this. Your system has to be nimble enough to react and be proactive with the data. I just wanted to add that because I think it's an important question. I would like to see that personally for our city. Thank you.

Matt Aronson: Thank you. That's really important to us. We know at the federal level that helps us make our argument and helps us understand and make decisions at this level about national funding, and we are very confident that it does the same at the local level. So us thinking about how we can infuse everything that we put out with a strong bias towards both getting data in a good way and using data is something really important for us to consider, so thank you for that comment.

Lonnie: We have a comment from the line of Ken Marx.

Ken Marx: Yes. I was just going to address the caller, a few moments ago, from Tennessee. We've been a part of the HMIS system for a number of years. There was initially a RHYMIS, which was the federal side and then HMIS. Now we have one data system, which is HMIS and we are also a part of the continuum of care organization through one of housing authorities in Michigan, so it gives us an opportunity to have our youth component represented as well as the Michigan Youth Opportunities Initiative youth who also help to drive some of the decisions and things related to youth homelessness in Michigan.

Matt Aronson: Great. Thank you. Yeah. We know there are some communities out there. I don't know where you are in Michigan. I know in the Upper Peninsula there's a lot of good collaboration. Further south there is good collaboration in Michigan. There are other communities that have had really innovative relationships between the HMIS as a system, the Homeless Management Information System, sometimes and with the schools let alone the other youth providers, so we really appreciate hearing those experiences. Thanks.

Lonnie: We have a comment from the line of Kathleen Wright.

Kathleen Wright: Hi. Talking about the HMIS, we're the collaborative applicant here. I've always thought we could expand that system if HUD would fund it better. I think that is a huge barrier to people asking agencies to join and put their data in. You can't do that kind of system for free. I've always wondered why when HUD asked us, well actually, forced us, if that's a word I can use, to implement an HMIS system in order to get funded. I was under the assumption that we all now are at the point, those of us who receive HUD funding, that we had to have an HMIS or part of one. Maybe that's not true, but that's what I had thought. Also we have to get our HMIS system funded here, and our local United Way has helped with that some, but we're looking at it again this year here in Springfield trying to find funds to get our agency, which does all of this work, and if you want the system to grow and to show real, true data, then you have to get everybody to input their data. When you don't attach any funds to a request, you're just not real successful at getting it to grow and grow and grow, so I've always wondered if HUD could look at that and put some funds towards making that happen.

Matt Aronson: Before you go I'm really curious, which Springfield is it. I think there's a Springfield in every state.

Kathleen Wright: Springfield, Illinois.

Matt Aronson: Alright, well, that's one of the more prominent, so that was probably my first guess. I will say that it is a requirement for CoC and now ESG and other providers to participate in HMIS. This last year was actually an opportunity where your communities were able to apply for new HMIS grants, so we have many, many communities, the vast majority, I think, of our CoCs I think actually do have at least one HMIS grant. This year there was an opportunity. I don't know what'll happen next year, but certainly understanding from us that without capacity it's very hard for you guys as communities to actually operate those things.

It's very important for us to keep in mind particularly as we ask for new and innovative things, whether it's through a demonstration or because we are implementing some new approach for us to remember and consider that even changes, even for communities that do have funding for HMIS,

when we're asking them to change and adapt, that can sometimes introduce a significant burden, and so we really need to consider capacity, so thank you for that. Any other thoughts. We've got about seven minutes. Certainly if you've got something that you don't think has been answered, please, but we're specifically trying to answer the question, what are those supports that we need to make sure that are ready for you. This is technical assistance, this could be one-on-one folks, this could be briefs and guides and explanations or letters from our agencies, frequently asked questions, your colleague letters. What are some of those things that are really important for us to get out that are going to enable you to do this work well?

Lonnie: Your next comment is from Steve Wrightman.

Matty Wrightman: This is actually Matty Wrightman. I'm with the Coalition on Homeless and Housing in Ohio. I'm really motivated by stories, and I think it'd be really helpful to have, whether it's case studies written up or kind of success-story webinars or inspiring videos, things like that, to get people more into the idea, about which your talking, and get community partners oriented and invested in this kind of process because it's pretty new for a lot of people.

Matt Aronson: I love the idea, and it's an idea that we're going to try to make sure that we do a lot of as far as case studies specifically when it comes to the interventions that we're going to offer or that we think are promising practices if not best strategies. Can you say a little bit more about using those types of tools or even some videos where we're interviewing people, et cetera, as a marketing tool and how you think that would be helpful in, whether it's building relationship or moving this forward in your community?

Matty Wrightman: Yeah. I think you said it well there. I think basically for me we're made of stories, like, the work that we do it's all about the sort of narrative process. I can't wrap my mind around a new idea unless I see it or see something that someone else has done. I think video is really powerful if it's done well, but there are other forms as well. Just to give people a tangible sense, like, you can't really know what's something is like from a blank slate from our imagination necessarily, so it's helpful to fill in that picture with existing stories from other places to help us get started. You know?

Matt Aronson: I certainly do. Thank you so much for that.

Lonnie: Our next comment comes from the line of Angela Hogan.

Angela Hogan: Hello. It's me again. When you're talking about things that I think we could use ahead of time, the one thing that occurred to me was in the veteran process. We got guidance from usage very, very late on benchmarks and what data we should be collecting to track how we were doing, like, two weeks before the deadline or something like that.

So for us, then, to try and go back and try and back fill all of what we thought we should have been collecting was really difficult. If there are definitions of terms and expected data that you know already that should be collected on the front end, any tools around those benchmarks would be really helpful on the front end.

Matt Aronson: Thanks. I think we're going to try our best, certainly when it comes to the demo, to be as clear as we can from a NOFA perspective in a much broader sense. I promise you, as I look a little over at my USICH colleagues, we've been working very diligently on some of that, basically all of the components of a youth-modeling strategy, which is kind of what we were building towards for veterans.

Jasmine Hayes: The only thing I would add, and this is Jasmine Hayes from USICH is that we fully recognize and are taking our lessons learned from the work on veterans and completely acknowledged the timing of what that did for communities. So taking that, we are now working on what we would, I think, propose as criteria and benchmarks for communities, so as Matt said, as they're getting into this work, and I think we would also look for the demonstration as an opportunity to test out some proposed benchmarks and criteria and help us to refine those.

Angela Hogan: Okay, and we're all learning.

Matt Aronson: Thank you. Thank you for doing some of the leading on that work. We really appreciate it. Alright. We probably have time for one more comment.

Lonnie: Your next question comes from the line of Kathy Tillotson.

Kathy Tillotson: One of the things that would be a great help is there's the WIOA funding that has a component on it for a certification training up to \$6,500. If there could be some education to Chamber of Commerce, businesses, et cetera about getting skilled worker by taking these homeless youth and training them in a skill that's a high-demand skill in something they need and using that funding and leveraging some of that WIOA funding to do that because it also the work experience and on-the-job-training kind of funding that can be used with the businesses to actually have the help to pay for someone to get skilled in the skill they need.

Matt Aronson: Terrific. Thank you. Yeah. We're very fortunate recently to have brought our labor friends into the conversation. They were very excited to talk a lot about things like that, so that's really key for us to remember as we think about the products that we need lined up for our communities to help them initiate conversations and build relationships with the entrepreneurial and the business aspects of their communities, so thank you. Before we go, we are just about out of time, I just wanted to thank everybody for participating.

This was fantastic. We will have one same time next week on Thursday. Please, look at the screen. We've got YouthDemo@HUD.gov. We are committed to putting all of this online verbatim, so you guys can go back and see what folks had to say. We really want this to be an opportunity for everybody both those who were on the phone and those who were off of the phone to learn from one another and to see. What we are going to use, what you said today will absolutely have an impact and probably already has given the notes that all of my colleagues were taking while you guys were talking. It has an impact on what we're going to do going forward. Thank you so much. YouthDemo@HUD.gov, we will be posting those. Thank you guys so, so much. Thank you to the team behind us who is helping make this work. I hope you guys have a great rest of your week, and we look forward to speaking with you and some of your other colleagues, who couldn't be on the phone, next week. Thank you guys very, very much. Have a great day.