

# HUD Cohort 6 100-Day Challenge Case Study

## Kings /Tulare Counties, CA: Increasing Dedicated Housing Options for Youth

**Kings and Tulare Counties developed new partnerships with housing providers during the 100-Day Challenge in order to secure dedicated housing set-asides for youth and young adults (YYA) experiencing homelessness.**

### HOW KINGS AND TULARE COUNTIES, CA MADE IT HAPPEN

Kings and Tulare Counties launched the 100-Day Challenge with a focus on developing better access to housing and services to meet the needs of YYA experiencing homelessness. Prior to the 100-Day Challenge, there were no YYA-focused or dedicated permanent housing resources in the region, resulting in slow housing placement rates and prolonged experiences of homelessness for YYA clients. The 100-Day Challenge Team and the Continuum of Care (CoC) were able to forge new relationships with the local Public Housing Authority (PHA) and local funders. These connections allowed Kings/Tulare to leverage new and existing housing opportunities to provide dedicated housing options for YYA experiencing homelessness.

The 100-Day Challenge Team partnered with the local PHA and the County of Tulare to establish 20 housing set-asides for YYA experiencing homelessness in a motel that had been purchased to provide interim and permanent, long-term housing in response to COVID-19 through California's [Project Homekey](#) initiative. The CoC utilized funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to develop these housing set-asides into Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) units for YYA experiencing homelessness. The 100-Day Challenge Team also worked with the PHA to secure a set-aside of 50 Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs) for YYA experiencing homelessness in the community. Local system leaders raised funds to help pay for move-in costs and supportive services partners provided wraparound services for YYA clients connected to housing through these new opportunities. Kings and Tulare Counties plan to advocate for additional YYA housing set-asides as new housing projects are developed and launched in the community. The CoC also plans to maintain a strong relationship with the PHA to secure HCV set-asides for YYA experiencing homelessness on a more regular basis following the 100-Day Challenge.

### Key Takeaways:

- Partnerships with housing providers and funders can help to secure new dedicated housing options for YYA experiencing homelessness.
- Local Public Housing Authorities and jurisdictions such as cities and counties may have access to funding and resources that can be used for YYA housing options.
- Housing projects may be able to establish preferences or set-asides to ensure that a number of existing housing units or resources are dedicated to YYA.
- Communities should ensure that YYA housing interventions are paired with wraparound supportive services. These may include (but are not limited to) mental health, education, employment, and life skills.
- Landlord outreach and engagement can complement YYA dedicated housing options and ensure YYA can utilize resources such as vouchers.

## LESSONS LEARNED

### **1) Develop Partnerships with Local Housing Providers and Funders**

Kings and Tulare Counties found that partnerships with local housing providers and funders – particularly PHAs and local jurisdictions – were crucial for developing new dedicated housing options for YYA experiencing homelessness. The Kings/Tulare 100-Day Challenge Team found that PHAs and local jurisdictions, such as city and county governments, have access to funding opportunities that may not be available to the CoC or homeless service providers but that can serve populations experiencing homelessness. The Kings/Tulare 100-Day Challenge Team recognized that these relationships should be cultivated as early as possible so that communities can respond quickly and develop shared priorities around populations of focus when new funding opportunities arise. Homeless service providers can bring information on YYA homelessness to housing providers and funders and advocate for dedicated YYA housing and service options through these partnerships. The 100-Day Challenge Team also identified the need to define clear mutual benefits of partnership, which may include roles for the CoC and homeless service providers in identifying eligible clients to participate in housing projects; supporting housing providers by helping to finding properties or landlords; and providing supportive services for clients.

### **2) Explore Options for YYA-Dedicated Housing Within New and Existing Housing Opportunities**

The Kings/Tulare 100-Day Challenge Team worked to identify new and existing housing opportunities where units or resources could be dedicated to YYA experiencing homelessness. The Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program administered by the local PHA allows for set-asides and waiting list preferences for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The 100-Day Challenge Team identified the opportunity to serve YYA experiencing homelessness through the HCV program and was able to work with the PHA to establish a set-aside of 50 HCVs to be used specifically by YYA experiencing homelessness. Kings and Tulare Counties also realized that new federal and state funding for housing in response to the COVID-19 crisis could help meet the needs of YYA experiencing homelessness. The community utilized RRH funds through HUD's CoC and Emergency Solution Grant (ESG) programs in coordination with California's Project Homekey initiative to connect YYA experiencing homelessness to permanent housing options more quickly than ever. The Kings/Tulare 100-Day Challenge Team found it important to their strategy to stay abreast of permanent, affordable housing opportunities in their region that may have units or resources that can be dedicated to YYA clients.

### **3) Ensure YYA Housing Options are Paired with Wraparound Supportive Services**

Kings and Tulare Counties recognized the importance of wraparound supportive services as an essential component of YYA-dedicated housing interventions. Some of the housing programs through which the Kings/Tulare 100-Day Challenge was able to secure dedicated units and resources for YYA experiencing homelessness do not provide wraparound supportive services as part of their program model. The 100-Day Challenge Team engaged nonprofit supportive service providers to provide wraparound services – including mental health, education, employment services, and life skills – to YYA connected to these housing options. Kings and Tulare Counties also made sure that YYA clients connected to permanent housing placements during the 100-Day Challenge were supported in developing housing stability plans to help prevent future experiences of homelessness. The community was able to make important progress towards its 100-Day Challenge by connecting YYA experiencing homelessness to available permanent affordable housing opportunities and working in partnership with service providers to bring in wraparound supportive services when needed.

#### **4) Complement Expanded Housing Resources with Landlord Outreach and Engagement Strategies**

Kings and Tulare Counties complemented their efforts to secure dedicated housing units and resources for YYA experiencing homelessness with expanded landlord outreach and engagement strategies. Efforts to increase the pool of landlords willing to rent their housing units to YYA experiencing homelessness were particularly important to support YYA with HCVs in identifying available units to utilize their vouchers. The Kings/Tulare 100-Day Challenge Team established a landlord risk mitigation fund to provide an added protection for landlords willing to rent to YYA experiencing homelessness. Kings and Tulare Counties also established a landlord relations specialist position to support YYA experiencing homelessness in the housing search process, communicate directly with landlords to advocate for YYA clients, and to open doors for additional market rate units. The 100-Day Challenge Team plans to establish a process for sharing information on housing opportunities and landlords across youth-serving agencies as part of their 100-Day Challenge sustainability efforts.