



100-DAY CHALLENGE CASE STUDIES

SOUTHERN NEVADA: COMMUNITY-WIDE COORDINATION OF HOUSING RESOURCES

During the Southern Nevada 100-Day Challenge, youth housing providers worked together to share their knowledge of existing youth housing resources and develop a coordinated community database of housing options for youth experiencing homelessness.

HOW SOUTHERN NEVADA MADE IT HAPPEN

During the Southern Nevada 100-Day Challenge, youth housing providers discovered that they each had their own set of housing resources and landlord relationships for working with youth experiencing homelessness. However, many of these resources were not widely known or shared among other youth-serving housing organizations. The 100-Day Challenge Team leveraged this discovery as an opportunity to develop a new community-wide process for housing providers to share their knowledge of existing youth housing resources, with a focus on increasing the community's ability to quickly and effectively house youth.

The 100-Day Challenge Team created a spreadsheet for each housing provider to enter information about housing options available to youth experiencing homelessness, including landlords willing to work with this population. This shared housing resource database can be used by all participating agencies to identify and connect youth to available and appropriate housing options. The Team organized the list of resources according to geographic area and provided information regarding affordability, unit composition, housing requirements, and current availability to improve matching of resources to individualized youth needs. In addition, the Team worked to increase affordable housing options by developing new landlord partnerships in each geographic area of Southern Nevada. Southern Nevada has been able to improve utilization of existing housing resources and explore new housing options through these ongoing youth housing coordination efforts.

Key Takeaways:

- Youth experiencing homelessness are better served when housing providers work together and maximize utilization of their existing resources.
- Coordination of housing resources supports a community-focused approach to ending youth homelessness by breaking down resource silos and organizational barriers to sharing information and knowledge.
- Knowledge sharing can help organizations recognize that they are an asset to each other. Housing providers can benefit from leveraging each other's strengths, specialties, and resources.
- Coordination allows housing providers to identify and tap into new youth housing resources quickly, efficiently, and without duplication of ongoing efforts.
- A shared understanding of the community's existing resources can help guide efforts to secure new housing resources or expand existing options.

LESSONS LEARNED

1) Adopt a Community-Oriented Perspective Towards Utilizing Housing Resources

Prior to the 100-Day Challenge, youth housing providers in Southern Nevada worked largely independently of one another and worked at an organizational level to secure housing resources and relationships to house youth experiencing homelessness. The 100-Day Challenge helped youth housing providers recognize that their work is part of a community-wide effort and that their resources are better utilized in a collaborative, coordinated manner. In focusing on the need for increased youth housing options at the community level, providers began to see their organizational resources as belonging instead to the community and to the youth that they serve. As youth housing providers began sharing information about their existing housing resources, they began to see their ability to coordinate and leverage existing resources as a community asset.

2) Acknowledge the Strengths and Specialties Each Housing Provider Brings to the Table

Coordination of a community's housing resources should include an inventory of the strengths, specialties, and resources each provider brings to the table. Each provider brings unique knowledge and experiences that can be leveraged in support of the community's housing coordination efforts. Additionally, recognizing the distinct ways in which each provider serves youth in the community helps bolster cross-provider partnership and ensure that youth are matched to the appropriate agency for their housing needs. It is also important to consider areas of expertise that might exist among providers, including experience serving certain youth subpopulations (ex: LGBTQ+ youth, pregnant and parenting youth), operating specific housing types (ex: host homes, Rapid Re-Housing), or providing specialized support services (ex: mental health services, educational supports).

3) Maximize Use of Existing Resources and Decrease Duplication of Efforts

The development of a shared housing resource database helped Southern Nevada's youth housing providers identify resources that were already being utilized across multiple providers, as well as resources that were being siloed and underutilized. Southern Nevada's youth housing providers have been able to use this knowledge to more quickly identify and tap into new resources without duplicating each other's efforts around resource identification and landlord outreach. The improved knowledge and utilization of Southern Nevada's existing housing resources has helped the community more quickly and efficiently move youth experiencing homelessness into stable housing options despite a tight housing market. Youth housing providers are also better able to serve their clients through the shared housing resource database because they have a larger pool of housing options to which they can match youth based on their individualized needs.

4) Leverage Knowledge of Existing Housing Resources to Identify New Resources

The Southern Nevada 100-Day Challenge Team not only coordinated their efforts around the identification and sharing of existing housing resources, they leveraged this work to coordinate around the identification of new housing resources for youth. Each housing provider was tasked with developing ten new partnerships with landlords who are willing to work with youth experiencing homelessness. A number of providers successfully engaged landlords and developed formal agreements to provide affordable housing options for youth. Housing providers also began to explore new and innovative ways to increase youth housing options, including the use of Rapid Re-Housing funds to support shared housing options and the set-aside of Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers for youth with a disabling condition. The community also increased its support for family reunification efforts as a means of connecting youth to a safe, stable housing option outside of the homeless response system.