



100-DAY CHALLENGE CASE STUDIES

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FL: STRENGTHENING CONNECTIONS WITH EMPLOYMENT PARTNERS

Throughout the 100-Day Challenge, Miami-Dade County's local Workforce Development Board forged new partnerships and worked collaboratively with homeless service providers to increase access to employment, education, and training opportunities for youth experiencing homelessness.

HOW MIAMI-DADE COUNTY MADE IT HAPPEN

Strengthening and expanding the youth homelessness system of care to connect youth with employment and education opportunities was an area of focus for Miami-Dade County's 100-Day Challenge. The 100-Day Challenge Team committed to taking action on this topic and established as part of their goal that they would connect 50 14-24 year old youth entering the homeless system of care through Coordinated Entry with training, education, or employment opportunities. The involvement of Miami-Dade County's local Workforce Development Board, CareerSource South Florida, was crucial for reaching this goal and reimagining the role of employment partners in working with the homeless system of care.

CareerSource partnered with the five major shelters serving Miami-Dade County to create Transition Management Teams to serve youth experiencing homelessness. The Transition Management Teams includes the youth, CareerSource staff, and shelter staff working together to develop a strategy and plan to address the youth's comprehensive needs. CareerSource provides education, employment, and training services as needed, while the shelter provides supportive services such as counseling, transportation services, and connections to housing.

Key Takeaways:

- Homeless providers collaborate with employment partners to more effectively serve youth experiencing homelessness and make them a priority for employment services.
- Communities should work with their local Workforce Development Boards as partners in preventing and ending youth homelessness.
- Employment services and homeless services complement each other. Employment services can be integrated into the homeless system of care, including co-location of services.
- Building career pathways for youth can help them exit homelessness and maintain housing stability. Employment partners can work with youth to develop the education, skills, and experience to sustain long-term employment in a career of their choosing.
- Consider the distinct employment needs of youth subpopulations, including LGBTQ+ youth.

As a result of the new collaborative partnerships between CareerSource and homeless service providers, 52 youth who entered the homeless system of care during the 100-Day Challenge were connected to training, education, or employment opportunities.

LESSONS LEARNED

1) Involve the Local Workforce Development Board in Efforts to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness

Local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) operate in communities throughout the country to provide education, employment, and training opportunities to low-income individuals, including resources and services designed for youth. Local WDBs are also encouraged to create standing Youth Committees to coordinate youth policy, ensure quality services, and leverage financial and programmatic resources.¹ Local WDBs have a wealth of youth-specific education, employment, and training resources and are likely already serving youth at-risk of or experiencing homelessness. Communities should ensure that they are working collaboratively with their local WDB and that they are involved as partners in efforts to prevent and end youth homelessness.

2) Integrate Employment and Homeless Supportive Services

In Miami-Dade County, employment services for youth experiencing homelessness were integrated into the homeless system of care through partnerships between CareerSource and the area's five largest shelters. CareerSource found that they need the support from shelters to be able to successfully serve this population, and in turn the shelters need employment supports to help youth achieve self-sufficiency. The community established a balanced approach to providing employment and homeless supportive services through the development of Transition Management Teams, which work with youth to determine their comprehensive employment, housing, and service needs and address them in an integrated way. Communities should look at how employment services can complement existing homeless and housing resources, as well as opportunities for these resources to be provided through collaborative efforts or the co-location of services.

3) Provide Youth with Pathways to Careers

CareerSource worked throughout the 100-Day Challenge to not only connect youth experiencing homelessness with employment resources, but to set each youth on a pathway to a career. This involved working with youth through the Transition Management Teams to identify individual experience, education, and skill needs and providing resources to fill any education or employment gaps that might serve as barriers to long-term, sustainable employment. Resources are tailored to the needs of each youth and may include educational support for obtaining a high school diploma or GED, training in a career pathway, and paid work experience.

4) Work with Employment Partners to Establish Youth Homelessness as a Priority

The 100-Day Challenge placed a new focus on the role of employment in addressing youth homelessness in Miami-Dade County and encouraged employment partners to make youth homelessness a priority. Through the 100-Day Challenge, CareerSource developed partnerships with homeless service providers that helped them overcome barriers to serving this population and work with youth experiencing homeless in new, more effective ways. The success of the 100-Day Challenge helped generate buy-in at all levels for CareerSource to maintain their active involvement in the homeless system of care and continue serving youth experiencing homelessness as a priority.

¹ U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, WorkforceGPS, "Youth Committees Under WIOA," Posted September 27, 2018, <https://youth.workforcegps.org/resources/2017/04/05/11/08/YouthCommittee>

5) Understand and Address the Employment Needs of Youth Subpopulations

Through the 100-Day Challenge, Miami-Dade County emphasized that different subpopulations of youth experiencing homelessness face distinct employment needs and challenges, including LGBTQ+ youth. CareerSource has begun to address these unique needs of LGBTQ+ youth experiencing homelessness by partnering with an LGBTQ center to provide employment services on-site. Communities should utilize data and the experiences of employment and homeless service providers to identify youth subpopulations that could benefit from access to targeted employment resources and services. It is also important to identify additional partners (such as LGBTQ centers) that can work with and support employment partners to provide the right services in an appropriate manner.