

# FRANKLIN COUNTY, MAINE

## BACKGROUND: WHY AND WHY NOW?

In 2018, Franklin County, part of the Maine Balance of State Continuum of Care, participated in the 100-Day Challenge to End Youth Homelessness. Franklin County is extremely rural, sparsely populated, and at over 1700 square miles, makes transportation to conduct outreach and access services time consuming and challenging. Harsh winters, along with a hidden homeless population, exacerbate the already challenging situation all communities face serving homeless youth.

The 100-Day Challenge allowed Franklin County to raise the visibility of youth homelessness, develop ways to locally house the community's most vulnerable youth and young adults, deepen partnerships with non-housing youth social service providers, and incorporate the perspective of youth with lived experience into the community's decision-making process.

At the end of the 100-Day Challenge, the team had raised the community consciousness of this critical issue and was on course to develop locally available housing for youth experiencing homelessness.

## 100-DAY CHALLENGE PRIORITY AREAS

System leaders in Franklin County identified the following priority areas to address during their 100-Day Challenge:

- **Identify access points and coordinate case conferencing** among youth and young adults experiencing homelessness.
- **Identify safe places (houses/businesses) to connect youth** for overnight and short stays.
- **Create a list of youth and young adults who have been identified through active outreach** such as social media, shelter outreach, schools, and universities.
- **Address challenges related to leases and income** to stabilize youth who have exited homelessness or are at risk of falling into homelessness.

Having explored these priorities, the 100-Day Challenge team set the following goal:

### **100-Day Challenge Goal for Franklin County, Maine**

In 100 days, we will align the resources in Franklin County to build a more coordinated system to better identify and support homeless youth, and we will connect at least 55 youth in crisis ages 14-22 to a safe place to be within 12 hours of identification.

**PROGRESS, SUCCESSES, AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

GOAL	RESULTS
<p>In 100 days, the community will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect at least 55 youth in crisis ages 14-22 to a safe place.</li> <li>• Develop a coordinated system for youth experiencing homelessness to be assisted within 12 hours of identification.</li> </ul>	<p>As of day 100:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 at-risk/homeless youth were assisted.</li> <li>• All funding streams addressing youth homelessness were connected.</li> <li>• Host Homes and 24/7 Safe Places in development.</li> </ul>

**100-Day Challenge: FRANKLIN COUNTY, ME Day 100 | Mar 21**

We will align the resources in Franklin County to build a more coordinated system to better identify and support homeless youth, and we will connect at least 55 youth in crisis, aged 14-22, to a safe place to be within 12 hours of identification.



**SUCCESSES IN INNOVATION AND COLLABORATION**

**RESOURCES AND AWARENESS**

The 100-Day Challenge allowed Franklin County to organize its limited resources available for homeless youth for the first time. Most of these resources involved faith-based organizations, civic groups, or municipal resources—individually they were not enough to meet the needs of homeless youth, but collectively they were able to make a difference. The community developed a resource

guide to assist homeless youth, which detailed resources available, ranging from housing and case management to thrift stores and coffee shops that allow individuals to linger.

To raise awareness regarding the challenges facing homeless youth, the 100-Day Challenge team canvassed business owners, spoke at church groups, and held town-hall meetings in multiple communities.

### **HOST HOMES AND TINY HOMES**

Once existing resources were maximized, the community turned its focus to filling gaps for housing youth. In response to local offers of assistance, Franklin County began the process of setting up a host home project. Given the complexity of the model, the community wasn't able to completely implement host homes by the end of the 100-Day Challenge, but it did put most of the pieces in place in order to launch a project.

During the host homes development, a community member donated vacant land to assist homeless youth. The community began developing this land with tiny homes to offer short and long-term housing.

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### **MAINTAINING 100-DAY MOMENTUM**

To preserve the gains made during the 100 days and maintain momentum around preventing and ending youth homelessness, Franklin County planned to:

1. Continue to meet as a work group and coordinate service providers assisting homeless and at-risk youth.
2. Operationalize the host home project, with plans to start housing youth in Fall 2018.
3. Develop tiny homes on donated land in Spring 2019.