

HUD Cohort 6 100-Day Challenge Summary

Kings/Tulare Counties, CA

100-Day Challenge Goal

In 100 days, 50 Transition Age Youth (18-24) will exit homelessness into safe and stable housing. We will attempt to connect 100% to mental health and other support services.

100-DAY CHALLENGE CONTEXT & FOCUS AREAS

BACKGROUND: YOUTH HOMELESSNESS IN KINGS/TULARE COUNTIES

Despite effective programs and dedicated providers, the number of people experiencing homelessness in Kings and Tulare Counties has been on the rise since 2016. Homelessness among unaccompanied youth and young adults (YYA) is one area of focus for the community, with 71 unaccompanied YYA identified as experiencing homelessness in the 2020 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count.¹ Additionally, 65% of YYA experiencing homelessness in Kings and Tulare Counties are in unsheltered situations – including the vast rural areas and national parks of the region – making YYA outreach, engagement, and connections to shelter and housing more difficult.

The 100-Day Challenge allowed Kings and Tulare Counties to coordinate among stakeholders and local system leaders to develop better access to housing and services to meet the needs of YYA experiencing homelessness. The 100-Day Challenge also provided a unique opportunity for Kings and Tulare Counties to further their work of strengthening the system of care targeting YYA to ensure culturally competent service delivery and engagement.

100-DAY CHALLENGE FOCUS AREAS

System leaders from across Kings and Tulare Counties came together to help identify the following areas of focus for their 100-Day Challenge to prevent and end youth homelessness:

- Transition Age Youth (TAY) who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer/questioning (LGBTQ+);
- Youth who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness; and
- Youth who are “couch-surfing” or experiencing “invisible” homelessness.

¹ Kings Tulare Homeless Alliance, “2020 Point-in-Time Count Report,” August 27, 2020, https://static1.squarespace.com/static/579939fd197aea7457647213/t/5f49741c80198253d12c2af1/1598649379957/2020+PIT+Executive+Summary_Final+Final.pdf

100-DAY CHALLENGE SUCCESSES, ACCOMPLISHMENTS & INNOVATIONS

SNAPSHOT OF 100-DAY CHALLENGE PROGRESS

100-Day Challenge Goal: In 100 days, 50 Transition Age Youth (18-24) will exit homelessness into safe and stable housing. We will attempt to connect 100% to mental health and support services.

OUTCOMES AS OF DAY 100: 40 YYAs safely and stably housed

Safe Housing Options



40 YYAs and ten children of young parents safely and stably housed, including through Rapid Re-Housing, market rate housing, and reunification with chosen family.

Connections to Services



29 YYA were referred to supportive services during the 100-Day Challenge, including 18 referrals to mental health services and 11 referrals to employment services.

Housing Placement Rate



100% increase in average number of YYA housed per month, from 5 YYA to 10 YYA housed per month during the 100-Day Challenge

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN SYSTEMS CHANGE

AUTHENTIC YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Kings and Tulare Counties utilized the 100-Day Challenge to establish the foundation for authentic and ongoing youth engagement, including development of a sustainable Youth Advisory Board (YAB). The 100-Day Challenge Team worked with an existing transitional housing provider and local college to identify YYA with lived experiences of homelessness who were interested in participating in the YAB. Kings/Tulare Counties utilized grant funding from Axa XL Insurance to jumpstart compensation for YAB members through flexible funding, while also establishing a set aside of CoC funds to support continued compensation. As part of sustainability efforts, the 100-Day Challenge Team hopes to connect the YAB with another youth-led organization in the community that engages YYA with lived experiences of housing instability. This connection between the two groups would help to create a more robust, youth-led space to facilitate ongoing YYA mentorship and leadership in the community. The CoC also provided support for YYA who wanted to share their lived experiences of homelessness to capture their stories and share them with the community to increase understanding and awareness of YYA homelessness.

CROSS-SYSTEMS COLLABORATION

The Kings/Tulare 100-Day Challenge Team found that working together with a variety of service providers, including frontline workers and upper-level management, can lead to better coordination of services and reduce roadblocks in the housing process for YYA experiencing homelessness. The 100-Day Challenge helped to strengthen partnerships between the CoC, homeless service providers, and youth-serving providers from across the education, workforce, mental health and housing systems, including a local college and Office of Education. This work to improve collaboration helped to streamline and connect the diverse systems that identify YYA

experiencing homelessness with the diverse systems that serve YYA experiencing homelessness, which in many cases were not interacting with each other prior to the 100-Day Challenge. Regular meetings with this cross-sector of service providers helped increase identification of YYA experiencing homelessness and get different, more diverse representation of YYA experiencing homelessness than were being identified solely through the homeless response system. Multi-agency collaboration also directly resulted in the launch of weekly case management check-in meetings and helped break down cross-system boundaries to advocating for YYA resources.

IMPROVED DATA SHARING AND CASE CONFERENCING PROCESSES

The 100-Day Challenge helped Kings and Tulare Counties to engage a wide range of youth-serving providers across systems in coordinated data sharing and case conferencing processes. A number of agencies that participated in the 100-Day Challenge were not part of the CoC and did not have access to the local Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and Coordinated Entry, creating barriers to sharing information on YYA clients experiencing homelessness. The 100-Day Challenge Team created a G-suite through Google to allow for the extraction of HMIS reports and creation of a fully HIPAA compliant by-name list (BNL) that could be shared with non-CoC youth-serving providers that are not currently participating in HMIS. These steps to facilitate cross-systems data sharing allowed for the launch of weekly YYA-specific case conferencing for YYA experiencing homelessness across providers, systems, and regions. YYA-specific case conferencing played an important role in helping Kings/Tulare Counties to more quickly and effectively connect YYA experiencing homelessness to available housing resources.

NEW AND INNOVATIVE HOUSING OPTIONS

Kings and Tulare Counties invested in new and innovative strategies during the 100-Day Challenge to provide permanent housing options for YYA experiencing homelessness. The 100-Day Challenge Team worked in partnership with the County of Tulare and a local Public Housing Authority (PHA) to set aside 20 Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) units for YYA experiencing homelessness in a motel purchased to provide housing in response to COVID-19 through California's [Project Homekey](#) initiative. The CoC also worked in partnership with the PHA to secure a set-aside of 50 Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs) for YYA experiencing homelessness. System leaders and other key stakeholders helped strengthen these housing options through fundraising efforts to pay for move-in costs once YYA were connected to housing. The 100-Day Challenge Team also worked to expand access to permanent housing options for youth through new landlord outreach and engagement efforts. The community established a landlord risk mitigation fund and developed a landlord relations specialist position to help support YYA experiencing homelessness in the housing search process and to open doors for additional market rate units.

IMPROVED ACCESS TO SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Members of the Kings/Tulare 100-Day Challenge Team recognized the importance of addressing mental and behavioral health and providing supportive services to address the specific needs of YYA experiencing homelessness. Kings/Tulare brought a number of diverse supportive service providers – including mental health, education, employment services, and life skills providers – to the table to help establish housing stability plans and coordinate access to individualized supportive services for YYA once housed. The CoC utilized an existing housing partnership with a local Community Action organization to develop new relationships around providing education and employment supports to YYA once they are connected to housing and serving as the lead agency to support the YAB. The 100-Day Challenge Team also created new mental health referral maps for Tulare County to improve YYA knowledge of and access to available mental health supports in the region. These coordinated supportive service efforts helped Kings/Tulare establish a better roadmap for YYA to access services while experiencing homelessness and while housed.

MAINTAINING 100-DAY CHALLENGE MOMENTUM

In order to lock in their gains and maintain the momentum around preventing and ending youth homelessness, the Kings/Tulare 100-Day Challenge Team plans to focus on the following priorities moving forward.

ACTION PLAN FOR ONGOING WORK

- Facilitating bi-weekly case conference meetings;
- Building rapport across providers;
- Utilizing landlord engagement specialist position;
- Advocating for youth set-asides in newly acquired housing units;
- Establishing a bridge housing program for YYA; and
- Continuing Youth Advisory Board (YAB) development and engagement.

Additionally, the team has established the following priority system shifts needed to sustain performance and proposed actions to make those system shifts a reality.

Priority System Shifts	Action Areas for System Shifts & Sustainability
Improving Coordinated Entry for YYA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing bi-weekly case conferencing with representatives from the 100-Day Challenge Team
Developing roles, positions and skills to address YYA homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite additional providers from Kings County to engage in YYA homelessness efforts and provide needed resources • Engage Department of Mental Health from both counties in regular meetings
Investing in authentic youth engagement to further progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct YAB focus groups • Establish steady compensation rates for YAB participation in local planning efforts
Increasing housing options and landlord engagement to sustain progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase landlord recruitment efforts • Share housing opportunities for YYA between youth-serving agencies